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New Statesman

MERCENARIES LET LOOSE

PLUS: MacGregor's bungling • Welsh Nats • Watching cruise • On Kerouac's trail • Paperbacks • Dance

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New Statesman

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Mercenaries let loose
Chris Horrie investigates the secret, violent world of US mercenaries 19

NEWS 4-6

HOME

Peter Kellner: Fabianism, Marxism and Markets 7
William Lord: MacGregor stumbles in strike month 8 9
Tony Heath: Welsh nationalism goes left 10
Polly Woolley: tracking cruise's excursions 12
Mike Coren: racist violence in the East End 13
Rob Edwards: Edinburgh's new Labour council 14
Jad Adams: drugs and how little patients know 16

FOREIGN

Nicholas Claxton: Ethiopia 22
Alan George: No unions for NUM to visit in Libya 23

WEEKEND

One sweet summer: Philip Marcus-Bober remembers a week at a Workers' Educational Association summer school in 1955. 22

BOOKS

Bernard Crick: Western Liberalism 29
David Caute: Saint-Germain-des-Prés 29
Stephen Knight: Poem 30
Francis Wheen: Fleet Street 30
Oliver Harris: Kerouac 31
Roger Lewis: Gilbert Sorrentino and other fiction 32
Alan Brien: Paperbacks 32
Shorter reviews 33

ARTS

John Spurling: Stubbs at the Tate 34
Francis Wheen: Films 35
Stephanie Jordan: Dance 36
Benedict Nightingale: *Tramway Road* 37

BACKCHAT

Jonathan Falla: Conversation in Kenya 38
Naseem Khan: Work in progress at the Cheltenham Festival of Literature 39
Hugo Williams: Television 40
Weekend competition 40
Salamanca 41

PLUS

This England 16
Mediawatch: John Ellis 17
Washington Diary: Claudia Wright 18
Roger Woddis 18
This England 23
Letters 24
Slump 24
Feedback: James Le Fanu 25

NEXT WEEK

David Selbourne on India after Gandhi
Simon Watney: When is photography Art?
Anne Smith on food and class

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New Statesman

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What Indira leaves behind

MRS GANDHI'S assassination has produced all the expected reactions about India. The Western cliché since independence in 1947 has been that India is the world's largest democracy. The immediate superficial concern has been whether Indian democracy will withstand the shock and whether Mrs Gandhi's Congress Party can achieve a stable transfer to a new regime in Delhi.

The reality of India is, of course, a great deal more complicated. And Mrs Gandhi, both as a politician and as a person, had come to symbolise that complexity. Pandit Nehru's daughter was a contradictory, Janus-faced personality — and India, too, faces in contradictory directions in so many of its aspects. Mrs Gandhi had it in her to respect the ballot box. But she also had it in her to be ruthlessly authoritarian. She had it in her to be considerate of persons and generous in policy. But she also had it in her to be unrelentingly vengeful. She was obviously capable of sophisticated political reasoning. But she could also give way to total paranoia.

In this she reflected the same Janus-quality of Indian politics. The central issue, four decades after the ending of British colonialism in the Indian sub-continent, remains quite simply this. To what extent is India the world's most populous democracy, successfully established on a British multi-party model that has proved unworkable in virtually the whole of the rest of the Third World: or to what extent is India a violent and unstable society, made up of many cultures, religions and languages, spread over a continent that in four decades Delhi has increasingly failed to weld into one nation?

Inevitably, perhaps, in the aftermath of a killing that appears to have been carried out by Sikhs in direct retaliation for Mrs Gandhi's order to the Indian army to storm the Golden Temple in Amritsar in June, the immediate answer appears to point to violence and instability. It is too early to judge whether Mrs Gandhi, or someone else in her place, could have developed over the years a different kind of Indian politics, having within it the power to draw the sub-continent together and to reduce the level of violence now underlying the system. History may well judge that the concept of trying to create a unitary state run centrally from Delhi over such a huge area and including such diverse elements was an impossibility; and that the politics of Mrs Gandhi over the years have been a growing reflection of that reality.

BUT TO CONTEMPORARY eyes it has to be said that Mrs Gandhi's responsibility for the state of Indian politics today seems very great and very personal. She has chosen over the years to identify central government power in Delhi with her own image as Mother India. She has chosen successive sons to be her main confidant and political adviser. For the rest she has surrounded herself for the most part with politically small people. The result was the creation of a situation, extremely unhealthy in any government but potentially lethal in a supposed parliamentary democracy, where the assumed succession was within the family, to a son with limited political experience and no political base.

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Mrs Gandhi's political relationship with the states has been equally unhealthy in terms of the growth of democratic federalism. Her reaction to almost, any opposition to her will has been to use her powers to remove state governments and governors and to install pliant satraps. Over the years she has removed elected state governments in this way some 40 times — most recently this year in Andhra Pradesh, where what happened was such a blatant gerrymander that her decision was reversed almost at once. In other places, like Kashmir and Punjab, she has worked to destabalise state governments, which did not accept her fiat.

The result has been that Mrs Gandhi has come personally more and more to dominate the centralised and formal politics of India, drawing all power to herself in Delhi. But at the same time those Delhi politics have become less and less capable of engaging with the reality of politics in India itself, or of seeming to offer a mechanism for coping with real problems. Sending the army to storm the Golden Temple was a symbol, not of the strength of Indian central government, but of its weakness in the face of a political situation over which it no longer had influence, let alone control.

The Gandhi legacy has two further elements that are certain to cause more future trouble. While she has been there, the struggle between the superpowers over India has been kept low — almost as if both the Soviet Union and the United States knew in their hearts that being drawn into Indian politics would produce more kicks than prizes. Soviet influence has been apparent in much of the Indian public sector; American in the private. But, if as seems likely, India is in for a period of political uncertainty, the pressures on Moscow and Washington to start meddling more will grow.

More fundamentally, Mrs Gandhi leaves behind her in many parts of India a level of political and inter-communal violence unknown for a generation. Her party had in political desperation begun to foster an appeal to Hindu nationalism as a unifying factor, where there were so few others. The result in the last year has been serious anti-Muslim riots in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bombay and elsewhere, quite apart from the Sikh troubles in Punjab. Her successors risk inheriting that whirlwind. □

Millions more will starve

THERE IS SOMETHING particularly nauseating about Mr Robert Maxwell's efforts to extract publicity for himself out of the Ethiopian famine by flying to Addis Ababa. It says something, though, that the *Daily Mirror* appears able to get emergency food aid to Ethiopia more quickly than the British government.

There is also something particularly hypocritical on the part of the British government in giving the impression that it was increasing its aid to help Ethiopia — only for an admission to be forced out of Mr Timothy Raison, the Minister for Overseas Development, that the money was being found from elsewhere in the aid budget. Mr Kilroy-Silk's comment that this was robbing the poor to pay the starving was exact.

But these immediate humanitarian and political responses do not address the underlying problem — which is the need for reform. Reform of the system of agriculture in the countries primarily affected by drought and starvation; reform of agricultural policies in the West, which positively damage agriculture in the Third World; reform of underlying economic relations and the pattern of aid between the developed and the developing world.

Ethiopia has caused the present reaction. But there are another 23 countries in Africa where emergency food is required. There will certainly be widespread starvation soon, too, in Bangladesh. The provision of emergency food aid does nothing at all to prevent the *next* famine. Of course it should be provided to deal with the present one. It is obscene that Western Europe should be storing and destroying food in order to maintain an expensive and inefficient subsidy system for its farmers, while millions starve in the rest of the world.

But it is also indefensible that at other times Western food surpluses are dumped on the world market in a way which undermines the efforts of Third World countries to create viable agricultural sectors for themselves. And it is indefensible that so much of British and other aid programmes should be pre-empted by prestige industrial projects, where the benefit is more to Western companies than to the developing economy itself.

The climate surrounding the politics of aid is at present extremely depressing. The Reagan Administration has effectively turned aid into a limited weapon of foreign policy, to be used to help clients and foster the growth of private sectors and free enterprise in the Third World, regardless of whether such projects make economic or social sense. As a result the United States has switched all its effort to bilateral aid, which it can control politically, and withdrawn its full support for multilateral agencies like the World Bank and the International Development Association.

In an attempt to stop the recent retreat on the aid front, the World Development Movement is this week launching a national campaign* to bring pressure on politicians to take their long-term aid responsibilities seriously. If the Ethiopian tragedy has reopened people's eyes to the reality of the present world economic order and stimulated a demand for change, some good may come out of it. □

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EX DEPUTY EDITOR TEARS INTO MURDOCH-ERA SUNDAY TIMES

A BITTER ATTACK on Rupert Murdoch's stewardship of the *Sunday Times* by Hugo Young, deputy editor of the paper from 1981 until earlier this year, is to be published in the coming issue of *Political Quarterly*.

YOUNG, a High-Church libertarian, accuses the *Sunday Times* of abandoning its former independence and adopting a largely uncritical pro-Thatcher stance; he also alleges that it has become the paper's practice to employ its 'news columns as an extension of the paper's editorial opinions'.

Young's four-thousand word critique doesn't once mention Andrew Neil, who took over as editor last autumn. Yet Young's specific criticism of Neil's right-wing high-tech, US-oriented enthusiasms is clear:

'Much space has been devoted to the wired-up society, a utopia denied. Even more has been available for lengthy expositions, usually written from an American think-tank, showing why Europe is finished and implying . . . that nobody in their senses should really be living outside the Pacific Basin.

'Very little space is any longer available for the discussion of poverty, inequality, injustice or anything which might be recognisable as a moral issue.' Behind the paper's new journalistic stance is a shift, he argues, from the notion of citizen as victim to that of citizen as consumer.

News distortion?

Young cites two major examples of news being distorted to fit the paper's new political stance. The first concerns CND's demonstration in London last October, when Young was still deputy editor: 'The paper's own inquiring and detached approach was effaced overnight by a staccato and unreasoned denunciation of CND.

'This was actually one instance where the readership showed signs of fighting back. The denunciation, ridiculing CND as a spent force, appeared the day after one of the biggest demonstrations ever seen in London had marched in protest against the arrival of cruise missiles.

'Readers noticed this jarring conjunction, not to mention the inadequate reporting of the demonstration. The weight of correspondence was fleeting evidence that the threshold of tolerant journalism had been transgressed.'

Guardian

Prize-winning columnist (e.g. British Press Awards) Hugo Young

Young's second example concerns the miners' strike: 'Anyone depending on the *Sunday Times* alone for their picture of the dispute would have received a strange impression.

'This could be reduced to the following elements: that the strike was a Marxist plot, that it wasn't supported by the mass of miners, that it was prosecuted largely if not wholly by intimidation, that the miners were steadily running out of steam, that coal-stocks were almost permanently rising, that the strike was about to collapse, and that the whole operation had been planned by the government from the start with a view to defeating the NUM by tactics brilliantly masterminded in the office of the energy secretary, Peter Walker.'

Readers 'got at'?

'After a few weeks even the dullest reader could have been excused for wondering whether he was being got at.'

Young concludes that the *Sunday Times* 'has ceased to do anything unique. It accepts an agenda laid down by someone else, namely the government, and originates little that disturbs current assumptions . . . It makes money but it no longer makes waves . . .

'The *Sunday Times* used to be a force in the land, a lamp in the darkness. For reasons which are capricious and unnecessary, these it has ceased to be.' ●

Euro-enquiry into racism

THE EUROPEAN Parliament is to mount an enquiry into the problem of race attacks in British cities, as part of a wider investigation into racism and fascism in Europe. The move has been sponsored by Alf Lomas, MEP for London North East, and is the first of its kind. It follows efforts in the European Commission to challenge British immigration practice. Richard Balfe, MEP for Inner London South, says: 'We see race attacks as being a fundamental breach of human rights'. ●

— see Mike Coren on racist attacks in the East End p.13

City AA fails in elections

A RESOLUTION criticising the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) attitude to the attempted police ban on picketing of South Africa House from the Trafalgar Square pavement this summer was defeated by 416 votes to 210, with 11 abstentions, at the AAM annual general meeting on 28 October. City of London (City AA) candidates for the AAM executive, including David Kitson, former prisoner in South Africa, failed to get elected (see NS 26 October). The African National Congress (ANC) had dissociated itself from his candidature.

James Kenny

Customs row

Now a Tory MP quizzes the Treasury. . .

THE SHOCK WAVES of Customs & Excise's seizures of books imported by Gay's the Word — detained authors include Sartre and Gore Vidal (see NS 19 October) — have rippled into Parliament again, and to New York.

For the first time a Conservative MP has intervened. John Wheeler (Westminster North) has responded to letters of complaint from constituents by asking the Treasury what scale of resources have been devoted to these proceedings, on whose authority, and by what guidelines.

Though not yet published the shape of the Treasury answers is already known, and makes one remarkable point: it's asserted that Customs are 'guided by. . .contemporary Court judgments' in deciding what imported material (in this instance lesbian and gay) to detain.

Which Court judgments in the UK would give precedent for the seizure of medieval and modern histories or the work of Socialist pioneer Edward Carpenter, besides Sartre and Vidal, is yet to be explained, and is expected to be the subject of further questions.

Meantime John Lauritsen, the American editor of the seized Edward Carpenter anthology (facsimile reprint of the original 1917 edition), is proposing a Speakout against Censorship in

Camera Press

'Giovanni's Room' author Baldwin

New York City in response to the behaviour of British Customs.

And the owners of Brilliance Books, one of the UK's gay publishing houses, flew to Nice on 29 October to see James Baldwin, the black gay American novelist, seeking his help — the day before Customs added the Rev. Richard Kirker, of Gay Christian Movement, to the list of those it has been seeking to interview.

Andrew Lumsden

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BELGRANO UNTRUTHS LODGED IN HANSARD

IN THE LAST two-and-a-half years the Parliamentary record has been corrupted by the cover-up over the *Belgrano*. As the government faces a renewed barrage of questions, JOHN RENTOUL looks over the record

NEW FACTS have emerged that require the Parliamentary record to be corrected:

FACT 1. The *General Belgrano* and the group of escorting ships were detected by *Conqueror* on 30 April 1982 and first sighted on 1 May 1982.

FACT 2. On 30 April 1982 the UK Government decided to attack the aircraft carrier *Veinticinco de Mayo* outside the exclusion zone and without issuing a warning to Argentina.

FACT 3. The *Belgrano* reversed course away from the task force at 9am London time on 2 May and continued to sail away for 11 hours before it was attacked.

FACT 4. The *Belgrano* made only two changes of course on 2 May: the reversal of course at 9am and one shortly before the attack — a minor change from 270 to 280 degrees. The record of the ship's course on 2 May is available.

FACT 5. The change in the Rules of Engagement agreed at Chequers at lunchtime on 2 May was not just to allow *Conqueror* to attack the *Belgrano* but actually authorised attacks on any Argentine warship outside its territorial waters.

FACT 6. The two destroyers escorting the *Belgrano* were attacked on 2 May as the ROE change made the day authorised. *Conqueror* returned to the scene on 3 May to continue the attack but was ordered on 4 May to stop.

Will Heseltine put the record straight?

We record here the 20 main untruths told to MPs by ministers. Will Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine put the record straight when he gives evidence to the Foreign Affairs select committee on Wednesday?

Mrs Thatcher 4 May 1982 '. . . the cruiser was accompanied by two destroyers, which were not attacked in any way.' (FACT 7)

John Nott (then Defence Minister) 4 May 1982 'The next day, 2 May, at 8pm London time, one of our submarines detected the Argentine cruiser, General Belgrano . . .' (FACT 1) '. . . closing on elements of our task force.' (FACT 3) 'The attack by our submarine involved the capital ship only and not its escorting destroyers.' (FACT 6)

Viscount Trenchard (then a junior defence minister) 4 May 1982 ' . . there was no doubt about the threat posed by the position and movement of this attack group . . .' (FACT 3)

John Nott 5 May 1982 'We could not conceivably had any lesser rules of engagement than those which we issued . . .' (FACT 5)

John Nott 13 May 1982 'At the time that she was engaged, the General Belgrano and a group of British warships could have been within striking distance of each other in a matter of some five to six hours, converging from a distance of some 200 nautical miles . . . There was every indication that the General Belgrano group was manoeuvring to a position from which to attack our surface vessels.' (FACT 3)

Peter Blaker (then a junior defence minister) 29 November 1982 'Throughout 2 May, the cruiser and her escorts had made many changes of course.' (FACT 4)

Peter Blaker 10 December 1982 Asked by Tam Dalyell at what time contact with the Belgrano was first made by the submarine: 'It would not be in the public interest to give this information.' (FACT 1) Asked how long the Belgrano had been on a course of 280 degrees (West) and what was its previous course: 'It is not possible to say.' (FACT 3, 4)

Mrs Thatcher 13 December 1982 Repeated the first part of Nott's 13 May 1982 statement (FACT 3)

Jerry Wiggin (then a junior defence minister) 14 December 1982 Asked by Tam Dalyell how long the submarine had been in contact with the Belgrano before it was attacked: 'It would not be in the public interest to disclose the extent of our knowledge of Argentine naval activity.' (FACT 1)

Peter Blaker 15 December 1982 '. . . would depend on her (the *Belgrano's*) speed and course, which she could vary at will, as she had throughout the day.' (FACT 4)

Peter Blaker 16 December 1982 'The General Belgrano made many changes of course throughout the day. It is not possible to give precise details (FACT 4), but her movements were consistent with the indications that she and her escorts posed a threat to the task force.' (FACT 3)

Mrs Thatcher 16 December 1982 'The General Belgrano and her escorts made many changes of course during 2 May. It is not possible to give meaningful mean courses for them . . .' (FACT 4)

Baroness Young (junior foreign minister) 13 July 1983 'The cruiser had changed her course many times during the day . . .' (FACT 4). Lady Young also quoted without demur the then Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, who said on 1 May 1982: 'No further military action is envisaged at the moment except to keep the exclusion zone secure.' (FACT 2)

Mrs Thatcher 21 February 1984 Asked by Tam Dalyell whether the Belgrano was detected the same day as it was sunk (as the government claimed) or the day before (as the submarine captain said): 'The full facts were given in several replies in the House . . . All the facts are there. They support the government's case.' (FACT 1, and, by implication, facts 2-6). This statement was a crucial part of the cover-up. The Table Office, which vets parliamentary questions, quoted it to Tam Dalyell when it refused to allow him to ask further questions about the Belgrano.

John Stanley (junior defence minister) 5 March 1984 'As my right hon. friend the Prime Minister said to the hon. gentleman (Mr Dalyell) on 21 February 1984, the circumstances of the sinking of the General Belgrano have been set out both in this House and in another place.' (FACT 1,3,4,5,)

In addition, various ministers have consistently and misleadingly referred to a change in the rules of engagement on 2 May 1982 to 'enable the Belgrano to be engaged' (FACT 5).

MISCELLANY

Fact-finding, no doubt

It isn't only the Dook of Kent who's living it up in Turkey these days (*NS* 26 October). A happy band of 50 from the public employees' union, NUPE, is currently on holiday there, a jaunt organised from NUPE's West Midlands office in Birmingham. If it's unlikely that the Duke of Kent is oblivious to Turkey's record on human rights, it's even less likely that NUPE employees are. Apparently NUPE encourages its members to join Amnesty International, and in the Birmingham office notices are displayed in the foyer announcing NUPE's protests at the torture of Nazif Kaleli of Turkey's public employees union. Will the holidaymakers be taking up his case? When the *NS* made enquiries we were told the only person who could comment was divisional organiser Barry Shuttleworth — who happens to share a house with the organiser of the trip, Rita Thompson. Unfortunately he was also away for a few days.

Careless rapture

Since Hugo Young (opp. page) doesn't *mention Andrew 'Two Chauffeurs' Neil, we will. That hard-driven, not to say much-driven, editor seems to be coming decidedly off the boil. Last week his* Sunday Times *made the most of its inspired leek about Scargill's Libyan connection. But the week before we were told breathlessly that the* Sunday Times *had located the IRA man behind the 1982 Hyde Park and Regent's Park bombings. An unrecognisably blurred photo — it could have been someone's chauffeur — purported to be the suspect in the Irish Republic. Neil was so excited by this scoop that he arranged to share it with ITN to get more publicity. A camera crew was put on alert, but then at the last moment ITN asked who the man was that they were off to film. When they were told that he was John Downey, the arrangement collapsed — because ITN did that story eighteen months ago and the British police have failed to get together an extradition case against him. But 'Two Stories' went ahead and published the Barrie Penrose exclusive anyway.*

Numbing recollection

'The jolly news today is that all fuel is to be cut off . . . Since Monday we have had no heating in our office apart from one electric fire. And now this is to be turned off from 9 till 12 and again from 2 till 4 each day. Wrapped in my fur coat with three pullovers underneath, my snowboots kept on, I am still too perished to work properly. The brain becomes atrophied . . . Most of the large shops are closed; those that are open have no electricity, and no light except from the odd candle. The streets are blacked out, as in war time, and millions are unemployed for industries have come to a standstill.

Food is becoming very short . . .' February 1947 in London, as described by James Lees-Milne in his diaries for 1946-47 (*Caves of Ice*, Faber & Faber). The middle classes took a sturdy view. Lady Bridget Parsons was 'quite ready', if an 'extreme Left government' replaced Labour, to go to the barricades and shoot. 'Who,' asked Lees-Milne: 'Well, almost anyone', she replied.

Ana Gram sillies (4)

Michael Meacher's name has yielded some rather peculiar anagrams from readers, in succession to Neil Kinnock ('I knock Lenin'), Roy Hattersley ('The Tory Slayer') and Gerald Kaufman ('A UK red flag man'). Devoted anagrammarian Mark Sievewright, obviously a reader with an eye for this sort of thing, offers: 'Rich male, me ache', though he does add — 'with apologies, Michael Meacher'. No celebrity novelists in contest this time, but John O'Byrne has found 'I ch-charm a melee'. Could he perhaps be D-David B-Bowie? See what you can do next week with Denis Healey.

Star row simmers on

Hopes that decisive battle had been joined between the Communist Party and the *Morning Star* last week were dashed when none of the *Star's* supporters turned out for the series of Special General Meetings of the People's Press Printing Society. The meetings were summoned by five CP members, in theory acting on behalf of the shareholders, though in reality on behalf of the Communist Party's leadership, and were an attempt to vote out the paper's editor Tony Chater, also assistant editor, David Whitfield and five of their loyal supporters on the management committee of the PPPS (which owns the *Morning Star*.) All the party's four resolutions were passed with resounding majorities (on average 1275:33) thanks to the boycott, the editor's supporters insisting that the meetings were out of order. So they turned out to be rallies of the faithful instead, leaving the CP leadership little closer to getting back its paper. Unless of course it resorts to the bourgeois courts of justice.

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Peace Protests Roll Call (8)

Total arrested to date in UK and Eire: 6,173

Arrests to date by location

London **470**

27.9.84. Stop the City. 470 arrested, mainly on bogus charges to clear the streets of demonstrators. Those arrested held for 9-10 hours in dark and overcrowded conditions (at the Old Bailey 220 persons in one corridor were held in 22 cells). Many people arrested as they arrived and released without charge in the evening.

3

Downing Street. Helen Joyce, Di McDonald and Linda Moody were each find £75 for obstructing police officers at a 12 Sept. demonstration. All denied the charges at the Bow Street Magistrates hearing on 15 October.

Glasgow **5**

21.8.84. 5 arrested for occupying scaffolding on a MOD building. All 5 held o/night and appeared next morning at Glasgow Sheriff Court. All pl. Not Guilty — next court appearance is 13 Dec.

6

3.9.84. 4 persons arrested after occupying cranes on MOD property — held until 2pm the following day and charged with b. of peace. All pl. Not Guilty and will appear at Glasgow Sheriff Court on 4 Dec. Also two legal Observers were later arrested at 4am in the morning — they too have been charged with b. of peace.

Sculthorpe USAF base, Norfolk **3**

2 women, Esther and Freda, fined £75 each plus £65.93 compensation costs to repair USAF fence plus £20 court costs. A third woman, Angie Zelter, has to re-appear on 23 Oct. at Fakenham Magistrates to be sentenced as she was found to be in breach of a cond. disch.

2

1.10.84. 2 women charged with cr. damage after each cutting one strand of the base fence at the start of a local 'snowball disobedience' campaign. Both will appear at Fakenham Magistrates on 16 October.

Watton RAF base, Norfolk **2**

Nov. 83. 2 arrested and charged with cr. damage to RAF base fence. They appeared at Kings Lynn Crown Court on 22 & 25 Nov. 83. One person was sentenced to 1 month's imprisonment and the other ordered to pay £100 compensation and one month suspended for 1 year.

Alconbury USAF base **140**

31.8.84. 140 protestors arrested after blockading the main gate. Taken to Peterborough Police Station where 119 were charged with obstruction.

Leeds **102**

9.8.94. Stop the City. 102 arrested — usual STC bogus arrests, ie for being a punk, walking in groups of three. . .taking photographs. Official charges are obstruction, br. of peace — and a nice one — blemish of the peace.

USAF Greenham Common **Total to 31.8.84: 1897 to 20 Sept. 1903**

1

16.9.84. Megan Williams appeared at Newbury Magistrates charged with damaging a MOD padlock.

4

19.9.84. 4 women arrested and charged with cr. damage to perimeter fence.

1

25.9.84. Jean Hutchinson appeared before Newbury Magistrates on 4 Oct. to answer to a charge of cr. damage to the perimeter fence.
5 of the Greenham Common women who covered their naked bodies with oil ash and tomato paste on Nagasaki day to try to communicate the miseries and horrors of war refused to pay their fines and were sentenced to 7 days in jail by Newbury magistrates on 16 Oct. Caroline Griffiths paid her £35 & £20 costs, Dee West was found not guilty of obstruction and a warrant was issued for the arrest of one woman who did not appear.
Another 6 Greenham women were sent to prison for 7 days for refusing to pay fines of £50 & £10 costs imposed upon them for obstructing the A339 Basingstoke Road on Nagasaki day. Catherine Powell had a £50 fine & £10 costs and Claire Roberts £25 & £10 costs imposed.
Caroline Jarvis was fined £50 and £10 costs at Newbury for 'abusive and threatening behaviour' (she threw 2 eggs over a hedge into the base narrowly missing a member of the USAF).

Would the young Scottish woman who entered the base alone around about 28-30 Sept. and was allegedly dragged and kicked by MOD police please contact Janey Hulme at the New Statesman**? Also any other woman who suffered injury or attack during the 10 days at Greenham from 20-30 Sept.**

Please send new information to ***Janey Hulme*** *at the* New Statesman. *Further arrest details, for which we have no space here, will appear in later Roll Calls.*

Labour's dull October

LABOUR lost ground in local by-elections held during October. In September Labour held a six-point lead; last month the Conservatives moved five points ahead.

The changes in party fortunes since Labour's conference closely match those reported in opinion polls; as always the Conservatives perform consistently better in the polls and the Liberal/SDP Alliance consistently better in by-elections.

Altogether 38 by-elections took place in October, of which 25 were three-cornered contests. Votes in these 25 elections divided as follows:

Conservative	18,911	35.9%
Labour	16,431	31.2%
Liberal/SDP	15,157	28.8%
Others	2,129	4.0%

Not counting 'other' candidates — their vote was unusually low in September and unusually high in October — Labour's share of the three-party vote fell by seven points in October, with the Conservatives gaining four points and the Alliance three.

The gains and losses table confirms that October was a bad month for Labour. Between June and September the party advanced consistently, with 13 gains and only 4 losses. In October there were two gains and three losses:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Conservative	14	7	3	10
Labour	17	3	2	16
Liberal	4	2	4	6
SDP	1	0	2	3
Others	2	2	3	3

On the face of it, the fact that the Conservatives lost half the seats they were defending suggests a weak performance by the Tories. However, this can be put down more to protest voting than any strong showing by Labour. Four of the Conservative losses were to the Alliance, the other three to independent candidates. The only two seats to change hands directly between Labour and Conservative were both Tory gains last week, in Cleveland and Lincoln.

Peter Kellner

Council scoreboard

27 September

Warrington DC LAB GAIN (Con)
Lancaster DC LAB GAIN (Lib)
Kings Lynn DC SDP GAIN (Lab)
Maidstone DC SDP GAIN (Con)
Dacorum DC Lab hold
Doncaster MBC Lab hold
***Lothian* Reg.** Lab hold
Motherwell DC Lab hold
Leeds MBC Lab hold
Cumbria DC Con hold
Notts CC Con hold
Kettering DC Con hold
Bedfordshire CC Con hold
Gedling DC Con hold
Wansdyke DC Con hold
Kings Lynn DC Con hold
Maidstone DC Lib hold
Richmondshire DC SDP "hold"*

4 October

North Yorks CC LAB GAIN (Lib)
Hampshire CC SDP GAIN (Lab)
Harrow LBC IND GAIN (Con)
Fylde DC IND GAIN (Con)
Ashford DC CON GAIN (Lib)
Hyndburn DC Lab hold
North Warwicks DC Lab hold
Hampshire CC Con hold
Chiltern DC Con hold
East Devon DC Con hold
Epsom & Ewell DC SDP hold

11 October

Sevenoaks DC LAB GAIN (Ind)
Wychavon DC Lab hold
Durham DC Lab hold
Teignbridge DC Lib hold

18 October

Weymouth & Portland DC LIB GAIN (Con)
Fareham DC SDP GAIN (Con)
Lambeth LBC Lab hold
Cheshire CC Lab hold
Wrexham Maelor DC Lab hold
South Kesteven DC Con hold

25 October

Newbury DC LIB GAIN (Con)
Richmond LBC LIB GAIN (Con)
Malvern Hills DC LIB GAIN (Ind)
New Forest DC IND GAIN (Con)
Cleveland DC CON GAIN (Lab)
Lincoln DC CON GAIN (Lab)
Haringey LBC Lab hold
Islington LBC Lab hold
Islington LBC Lab hold
Wandsworth LBC Lab hold
Kirklees MBC Lab hold
Rugby DC Lab hold
Lincolnshire CC Lab hold
Greater Manchester City Con hold
Hastings DC Con hold
Fylde DC Con hold
Richmond LBC Lib hold

**Seat previously held by Liberal*

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CAN MARKETS BE SOCIALIST?

For fifty years there has been little advance in specifying how market forces can be made compatible with socialism. Peter Kellner advances a new approach

> The innumerable living participants in the economy, state and private, collective and individual, must serve notice of their needs and of their relative strength not only through the statistical determinations of the plan commissions but by the direct pressure of supply and demand. The plan is checked and, to a considerable degree, realised through the market . . . Economic accounting is unthinkable without market relations.
>
> Leon Trotsky
> **The Soviet Economy in Danger**, 1932

BEFORE ANYONE responds by disinterring some other Trotsky quotation saying the opposite, I should make it clear that I am not nominating the old brute as a posthumous member of the Fabian executive, or as chairman of the Anthony Crosland Appreciation Society. Rather, I am seeking to draw attention to one of the few attempts to explore the black hole of socialist economics: what role, if any, can market mechanisms play in a socialist society?

Our fundamental attitude to markets does matter. It matters (or should matter) to us as socialists: we need a vision of the kind of society to which we aspire; and for that we need in turn some kind of coherent moral and intellectual set of objectives. Without a clear view of the role of markets our objectives may be morally admirable, but they are doomed to intellectual incoherence. Without intellectually robust objectives we should be unable to specify a long-term programme for socialist advance.

Against this it might be said that socialism is not about replacing *all* market forces and that — as Trotsky said — the forces of supply and demand will have to be revealed to a considerable degree through market relations. Yet once we move away at all from the ideal of pure non-market socialism, we enter difficult territory. If *some* markets are to be permitted, we need to specify their scope and criteria for operation. If they play a part in determining the price and output of some finished goods and services, what about the wages of those people who supply them?

What about the price, production and pay levels in the component factories before the finished products are made — and for the distributors and retail outlets afterwards? These are deep waters, comrade Watson. No wonder many socialists choose to keep dry and not plunge in. In *Arguments for Democracy*, for example, Tony Benn dismisses the point in a single sub-heading, 'The incompatibility of a strong political democracy with a market economy.'

The most basic point to establish is that markets *per se* need not be anti-socialist. They have some properties that are desirable and others that, left unchecked, are undesirable. Among their desirable properties are the transmission of information on which economic decisions can be based and the revelation of consumer preferences. Among their undesirable properties is their tendency in most capitalist environments to generate unacceptable inequalities in wealth and power. If we define our socialist objectives in a complex, modern society to be the fairest feasible distribution of wealth and power — rather than the narrower definition of *absolute* equality — then the abolition of markets becomes not only unnecessary but *undesirable*.

This point is worth stressing, because any attempt to abolish markets completely carries costs which are only remotely worthwhile if absolute equality is considered to be so vital an objective that *any* deviation from it is morally unacceptable. The principal cost of an absolutely equal non-market economy stems from the need to plan the production and distribution of each product, and each component of each product, in the absence of information about needs and preferences.

Even if we could collect in one place at one time all known information about every economic activity, down to the last detail, the complete determination by planning of how to proceed would still be impossible, as Alec Nove observed in *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*. In the Soviet economy, he wrote,

> there are about 12,000,000 different products if these are fully disaggregated. There are in all some 48,000 plan 'positions'. In other words, the average 'product' which is the subject of a plan-instruction is an aggregate of 250 sub-products. These cannot be the subject of systematic plan-instructions because of the 'curse of scale', there would be far too much information to handle.

THERE ARE, then, two main reasons why socialists should embrace markets to some degree — not as an unfortunate necessity to be endured for a limited period, but on principle. One is that the efficiency costs of abolishing all market forces far outweigh any possible moral gains of securing absolute equality in a planned, non-market system. The other reason is that markets can actively facilitate the exercise of consumer choice.

At its root the issue of socialism and markets (of which the role of decentralised co-operatives provides a particular case) concerns the proper relationship of the community as a whole to transactions made within the community. In 'pure' socialism the problem does not exist, because all transactions are subordinate to the decisions of the community or state. But in any other kind of socialism — where voluntary transactions among individuals, and between individuals and enterprises, are regarded as legitimate freedoms — the rules governing voluntary transactions need to be established.

Both photos: Camera Press

Leon Trotsky (left): 'economic accounting is unthinkable without market relations'; Anthony Crosland: 'The only sensible approach is a strictly empirical one'

We need, in short, a socialist theory of markets.

It is easier to list the things markets should not do than to come to terms with what they should. They should not be allowed to undermine political and strategic economic decisions arrived at by democratic processes; nor should they be allowed to generate extremes of wealth and poverty. Yet however widely we draw the area from which market forces are banned, there will remain others where they will apply. Has socialism anything to say about these aspects of our economic life, or do we assign to them the status of capitalist ghettos, where capitalist rules and theories still apply?

In *The Future of Socialism*, Anthony Crosland shied away from this point. While attacking the 'pure' socialist notion that everything should be planned, and allocating to the State the task of generating greater equality, he said little about *how* markets should function. Indeed, he seems not to have regarded this as a problem:

> There will be cases where the government wishes to intervene to override the market allocation of resources . . . One cannot list such cases by

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> reference to general *a priori* principles. The only sensible approach is a strictly empirical one . . .

I believe it should be possible to develop a positive, socialist view of markets: that is, of the rules that govern those transactions that take place voluntarily among individuals and enterprises without prior determination by the State. Moreover, I believe that we neither should nor need to carry the theoretical baggage of pure free-market economists to design those rules — although it would be futile to pretend that there would be no points of similarity.

I take as given socialist abhorrence of the moral values of capitalism, and indignation about its consequences. Abhorrence, however, provides no substitute for analysis. The essential reason for rejecting conventional free market mechanisms for general regulation of the market sector of a socialist society is technical rather than moral. It is that one central tenet of free market economics is wrong: the assumption that, in general, the only people affected by any transaction are the seller and the buyer.

To take a notional example, if I buy an electronic splong-doodle, and if both I and the shopkeeper are happy with the transaction, then — conventional economic theory holds — the general well-being of society is increased. And, the theory runs by various stages, the more perfect the market in splong-doodles is, the more their sale contributes to society's well-being.

But suppose others are affected by the sale of splong-doodles. They make a noise, which disturbs others. They are delicate, and require wrapping in large amounts of paper and cardboard. This (a) means that more trees must be chopped down, harming the ecology of forests; and (b) increases the pressure on the local refuse collection system. One of the components of the splong-doodle is the rare element milennium, whose world supplies may soon be exhausted. The chemical processes involved in making splong-doodles cause poisonous fumes to be emitted into the atmosphere, and extra muck to be disgorged into rivers. Splong-doodles, being immensely popular with children, are apt to cause eye-strain, bad back-muscles (caused by sitting too long on the floor) and a lack of outdoor exercise; so widespread sales of the splong-doodle increase pressure on the health service.

Economics textbooks refer to these by-products of economic activity as 'externalities'. They generally play only a minor role in textbooks. For example, the edition of Paul Samuelson's *Economics* that I used as an undergraduate contains just a one-page appendix item in the middle of a book 838 pages long. As with other texbook writers, Samuelson treats externalities as aberrations from normal economic behaviour: the task is to identify the particular (and by implication rare) cases where externalities arise, and then handle them appropriately.

Otherwise market forces should be allowed to run their course. However, when they *do* arise, even conventional free market economic theory acknowledges the justification of government intervention. Samuelson's appendix item states:

> External economies have a considerable importance in connection with government activities that provide benefits to many individuals. They are important too in connection with growth, where the building of a public road or some kind of 'social overhead capital' like a hospital or dam has favourable external repercussions on many families, firms and industries.

As to external *dis*economies, Samuelson's examples cover both the commonplace and the extreme:

> Smog in many cities comes from the external diseconomies of each man's auto and factory. The greater external diseconomy of all results from one country's setting off nuclear weapons.

The acknowledgement that externalities warrant government intervention is significant. Free-marketeers seek to limit the damage this does to their case by cordoning off externalities from 'normal' economic behaviour. Yet suppose externalities are the rule rather than the exception — that is, that economic transactions routinely and systematically confer benefits or disbenefits (or a mixture of both) on people other than the sellers and buyers, then externalities should be brought from the periphery to the centre of economic thinking.

And if that is so, it follows that governments have a right, even a duty, to intervene substantially in the rules governing market transactions. The question then becomes not *whether* governments should intervene in the operations of markets, but *to what purpose* they should intervene.

ONE OF THE FEW twentieth century economists to try to integrate externalities into economic policy-making was A.C. Pigou, who advocated systems of taxes and subsidies to 'correct' external economies and diseconomies. Apart from the technical judgment that externalities can be measured and corrected, this approach carries a moral assumption that there exists a free market norm for all transactions: where externalities drag behaviour away from that norm, taxes and subsidies should drag it back.

There is an alternative, socialist approach: to intervene not just to correct the distortions of externalities, but to shift economic activity towards explicit socialist objectives. The crucial difference between 'socialist' and 'capitalist' economic policy should be whether the market has to accommodate to public policy, or *vice versa*. Certain activities would be banned, or regulated, or taxed, or subsidised, not according to some notional measurement of the externalities involved, but according to stated social objectives.

Now if that sounds an heretical point — heretical to purists on both sides of the socialist/free-market divide — consider the following point. *Modern societies work like that anyway.* By a higgledy-piggledy set of laws and regulations, constraints exist in a vast number of market sector transactions. Here is a random list of areas where controls of one sort or another apply in Britain today:

> Abortions, agricultural pricing, broadcasting, building (almost anything anywhere), clean air violations, credit ratings, copyright protection, data protection, definition of a bank, definition of a pork sausage, disclosure of 'spent' offences, disposal of 'spent' nuclear fuels, door-step selling, drug sales, employment of disabled people, firearm sales, health and safety practices at work, laws of libel, contempt and confidence, lead in petrol.

Yet there is something strange about public debate of these issues. They tend to be discussed as if they are wholly separate from 'the economy'. Indeed, it is often the 'free-market' Right which is keenest on specific social restrictions (e.g. video nasties) while the 'socialist' Left is often in the vanguard of moves to reduce restrictions (e.g. conveyancing). Once we move away from the purist positions of free-market capitalism and non-market socialism, a far more diverse and complex, but surely far more relevant, set of economic and social issues present themselves for our attention. The critical task for socialists becomes the need to reconcile the proper role of the State with the proper role of markets.

An outline of that relationship could be as follows. The State would directly control the country's main strategic, economic and social activities. It would have a greater role than now, although not necessarily vastly so. The principal area that lacks needed control is banking and insurance. Control does not necessarily mean ownership: what matters is who manages and how. However, in the rest of the economy — and that would be most of it — the focus of attention should shift from central control to decentralised operation within a clear national framework. That is, the State would lay down various general conditions within which voluntary transactions would then take place.

We would have an economic equivalent of 'the rule of law', where the public interest is matched against individual freedoms. The key difference between what already happens and what would happen in a socialist society is that the rules would be designed to achieve certain general objectives — above all, greater equality in the distribution of wealth and power — rather than, as now, specific solutions to *ad hoc* problems.

For example, it should be possible to impose quite specific obligations on the behaviour of companies without creating bureaucratic monopolies and without preventing competition. The rights of employees to acquire a majority of voting shares, together with general laws on pay and employment conditions, could do more to transform the distribution of wealth and power than any attempt to channel all commercial decisions through a computer in Whitehall.

Naturally there would be *more* successful and *less* successful enterprises; and the workers in more successful enterprises would be better off. Some degree of inequality — softened by a progressive tax system — would be inevitable. The trade-off would be between *some* inequality and a *lot* of freedom to take local decisions.

This argument seeks in no way to minimise the importance of the traditional, and still valid, socialist argument that freedom has little tangible meaning for a great many people in an unequal capitalist society. My central argument is that socialism, if it is ever to win widespread popular approval, must find a way of reconciling freedom of individual action in the marketplace with State power. My belief is that such a reconciliation is not only necessary — but possible. □

This is an edited version of Peter Kellner's contribution to Fabian Essays in Socialist Thought *published next week by Heinemann £8.50 to mark the centenary of the Fabian Society.*

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Steve Benbow/Network

MacGREGOR SELF-DESTRUCTS

Brought in as a million-pound superman by Mrs Thatcher personally, the chairman of the NCB has created chaos among, successively, the NUM, Nacods and now his own board. William Lord analyses the management confusion behind the Eaton and Kirk affairs

UNTIL MONDAY things were looking up for Ian MacGregor, chairman of the National Coal Board, in his 7-month old clash with miners' leader Arthur Scargill.

By the weekend the pit deputies' potentially crippling all-out strike had been called off; Acas talks on the main dispute were in limbo, but only because of apparent intransigence by Scargill. The *Sunday Times* (helped by the government's observant dirty tricks departments?) had revealed Scargill's stupid attempt to get support from Libya's Colonel Gadafy.

But then MacGregor snatched propaganda defeat from the jaws of victory, with the announcement that Michael Eaton, the north-Yorkshire area coal boss he had assigned the role of spokesman and Mr Fixit barely ten days earlier, was being stripped of his new responsibilities. This bizarre exercise seemed on the surface inexplicable. In reality, however, it was an inevitable outcome of the hitherto secret war that has been going on inside the National Coal Board ever since MacGregor took over the chairmanship just over a year ago.

It seems odd now to recall that MacGregor was hired for his managerial skills. Mrs Thatcher was so pleased with his apparent success in cutting losses at British Steel, and so desperate about the lack of hard men to take on the miners after ill-health removed Sir Norman Siddall from the coal board chair, that she turned to the ageing Scottish-American to do the same trick on coal.

So confident was the then energy secretary Nigel Lawson of MacGregor's ability that MacGregor's New York merchant bank, Lazard Freres, was paid 'up front' the £1,000,000 'signing-on fee' it demanded. Significantly, MacGregor's earlier and equally controversial British Steel performance-related bonus (which he has been judged to have earned by the Whitehall and business adjudicators whose job it was to interpret his contract) is being delayed and hushed up in these delicate days.

From the outset, MacGregor made no secret of his contempt for management in the British coal industry. He used to compare them unfavourably with the stalwarts like Bob Scholey he found at steel. They had no idea of business and markets, thought MacGregor; they only knew about hacking coal.

Above: Albert Wheeler (right), tipped as successor to Ian MacGregor, whose star is on the wane.

As soon as he came in, he turned the management system upside down. Out went the board's general purposes committee at which policy was discussed once a fortnight in addition to monthly board meetings. Instead an 'office of the chief executive' was created, consisting of MacGregor, his deputy chairman Jimmy Cowan, the board secretary — re-titled chief of staff — and MacGregor's personal assistant, Dr Anne Parsonage, a product of the NCB's own administrative training programme.

But this office has been just a mechanism for executing MacGregor's orders. Cowan has little authority, and does not seem to enjoy the trust of his boss. Other senior managers complain that there is no longer any forum for them to debate policy with the chairman. Often they simply do not know what he is up to, although members of the industrial relations department are in the front line of handling sensitive dealings behind the scenes with the National Union of Mineworkers and now with officials of Acas.

Indeed, for the first four months of the strike

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there was not even any daily coordination among top management on immediate issues. That has since, theoretically, been fixed by a crisis committee involving MacGregor, Cowan, the industrial relations boss Ned Smith and the publicity head, Geoffrey Kirk. Now Kirk is, as the NCB puts it, 'on leave'.

The Eaton affair, however, illustrates how confused the internal management system still is, and how it has exacerbated growing divisions within the board. MacGregor appointed Eaton to his spokesman role in order to head off criticism of his own abject failure to present a coherent case to the public for closing the board's long tail of lossmaking pits. In coal industry terms, and along with transfers and redundancy arrangements, there is quite a case for switching from extracting high-cost coal to mining only the abundant reserves that can be brought to the surface for less than the £40 a tonne that the coal can be sold for.

MacGregor's worries about protecting his own flank grew after he was summoned to 10 Downing Street to be given a dressing-down by Mrs Thatcher in mid-September about his public relations disasters. The prime minister was particularly enraged by the way MacGregor had succeeded in alienating the 16,000 members of the quiet deputies and overseers in Nacods.

Shortly after this, a special meeting of the board was called one evening to discuss the same issue. This was at the instigation of David Newbigging, the Hong Kong financier appointed to the board by MacGregor as part of his drive to oust the mining engineers and stuff it with City figures as non-executive directors. Despite the presence of such MacGregor supporters as Colin Barker (ex-ITT and British Steel finance director) and David Donne, the feeling was that MacGregor was not performing.

Since January, MacGregor had removed from the board three senior mining figures (Philip Weekes, the Welsh area director, John Mills and Donald Davies), replacing them with the likes of Barker and Donne. But now even MacGregor's friends were turning against him. Criticisms of his public relations failures on television were increasingly becoming code for saying that coal's new king had no decent executive clothes.

BUT THE EATON initiative only served to galvanise the embattled managers disillusioned with MacGregor's style. Just as Scargill had failed to tell his executive about his Libyan plans, so MacGregor unveiled his new Mr Fixit without even telling, far less consulting, Cowan or the board's personnel director Merrick Spanton. They were understandably furious. Spanton's number two, Ned Smith, had already been off work for a few days after a blazing row with MacGregor. But now, after the Eaton appointment, the three disaffected top managers had a powerful common cause: they threatened to resign if MacGregor did not reduce Eaton's role. So the new man was not present at the Acas talks last week, and by Monday MacGregor had been forced either to accept the embarrassing resignation of his top three managers to climb down over Eaton. He chose the latter.

But opposition to MacGregor spreads farther down the management hierarchy than head office at Hobart House — overlooking Buckingham Palace, near Victoria station. The Scottish area director Albert Wheeler was particularly upset by MacGregor's handling of Nacods. Throughout the dispute Wheeler had held to a tough policy with Nacods. He assured them, on the one hand, that members of the British Association of Colliery Managers (many of them ex-deputies) would not be asked to cover for Nacods members. But Wheeler was also insistent that Nacods members in Scotland must simply get through picket lines.

The Scots did, unlike their Nacods colleagues elsewhere. They, coal board officials allege, would wake up sleepy NUM pickets to ensure they, the overseers, did not have to go to work to earn the salaries they were still being paid. The Hobart House guidelines in August (no show — no pay), designed to squash such laxity in Yorkshire and the North East, only served to anger Wheeler and his Scottish Nacods members. MacGregor, typically, made things worse by loftily telling BBC's *Newsnight* in mid-August that Nacods accepted the new rules, when plainly they did not.

As MacGregor's star wanes, Wheeler is increasingly being talked of as the likely next chairman of the NCB. To an extent, MacGregor has always enjoyed an inflated reputation as a manager. He left Amax, the American mining group he put together, in considerably worse shape than was thought at the time of his exit into Lazard Freres. He chaired an important committee put together to revive the Singer sewing machine group in America, also with notable lack of success.

Closer to home, MacGregor reaped undue credit for the turnround in British Steel's fortunes. The real dirty work of cutting capacity from 22 million tonnes a year to 15 million tonnes, with closures such as Corby, was done — despite his image as an arch-aristocratic wimp — by his predecessor Sir Charles Villiers, guided by a smooth young assistant Chris Beauman and his chief executive, the rough-and-ready Bob Scholey.

MacGregor's 'success' was in exploiting the weakness of the steelworkers, cowed by their 13-week strike in 1980, to halve the 160,000 steel workforce without cutting production by much. MacGregor undoubtedly won the obedience, if not the respect, of those steelmen who did not sell their jobs for fat redundancy cheques. In the process, he raised productivity dramatically.

The miners have seen further ahead than MacGregor's quite modest plans to cut only 4 per cent of the NCB's capacity to stem its losses. The future for the super-pits, such as Selby and Vale of Belvoir, is to be one of increasing automation. Whether it wins or loses this strike, a MacGregor-inspired coal board will be seeking to work the profitable pits with fewer and fewer miners. Today's job losses come from closures, as with steel back in 1980, but tomorrow's will come from replacing miners with machines. That is also what MacGregor and the strike is all about. □

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NATIONALISM

PLAID GOES RED

Labour is no longer the only natural home for Welsh socialism reports Tony Heath

WELSH nationalism took its courage in its hands when, after years of hesitation, the annual conference of Plaid Cymru last week chose a left-wing MP, Dafydd Elis Thomas, as leader. In a one-member one-vote contest he defeated the old guard's standard bearer Dafydd Iwan, a folk singer and businessman, replacing as president the party's other MP, Dafydd Wigley, who did not seek re-election.

The conference, at Lampeter in West Wales, voted to pursue policies of community-based socialism. Some old-style nationalists are likely to find the shifts in attitude hard to take. But this year's gathering of the faithful was notable for the number of young faces and the constant reiteration of the concerns of the Valleys — articulated in the English language.

More emphasis is to be given to wooing voters in the industrial south where three-quarters of the population and much of the muscle reside. This shift has been accelerated by the miners' strike which the party has supported ever since Thatcher's war was officially declared on 6 May by her field commander Ian MacGregor.

As with the other parties the dispute dominated the conference. A deputation from the coalfield, which included supporters of the Labour and Communist parties as well as nationalists, was given an emotional reception. It was an impressive demonstration of the unity which sustains the South Wales miners and their families after eight months of struggle.

The accession of Thomas — at 38 the youngest leader of a party in Britain and with 10 years' Parliamentary experience under his belt — is the outcome of a lengthy campaign by Left

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nationalists. Tory attacks on the Welsh economy, which have almost trebled unemployment to 181,927 (17 per cent), have fed the campaign.

In a scenario familiar to Labour Party watchers the socialists rallied to a National Left group established by Thomas and his supporters. The Right organised a defence round the traditional nationalists' belief that all Welsh people — Left, Right and Centre — could coexist under the Plaid umbrella, work for a vague concept of Welsh freedom and only then try to reconcile the conflicts of capital versus labour.

Class themes have now triumphed over those of culture. However, Thomas and a national executive committee which broadly supports him still give high priority to the politics of the Welsh language. In the future it is intended to use that prickly question as a political lever instead of elevating it to an article of faith. Thomas says: 'Without a healthy economy the language cannot be sustained by handouts from the British state'. The militant Welsh Language Society echoes that and warmly welcomes Plaid's swing to the Left.

IN ELECTORAL terms the party, founded in 1925 as little more than a cultural pressure group, has a long way to go. It hopes to capture another two Parliamentary seats next time round. But four out of 38 is hardly a claim to speak for Wales. And while in the late 1960s and early 1970s the nationalists ran Labour a close second in by-elections at Rhondda West, Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil, last year they lost deposits in two of the three seats.

Outside the industrial south, Plaid has dug in deeply in the Welsh-speaking heartlands, taking over the radical tradition from Labour which itself replaced rural Liberalism after world war two.

There are not many Labour votes left for the nationalists to win in Thomas's own sprawling Merionnydd Nant Conwy constituency. In June 1983 Labour came bottom of the poll with 15.1 per cent of the vote; in February 1974 Thomas won the seat with 34.6 to Labour's 32 per cent.

Inevitably the new battle ground will be Labour territory, the Valleys and the industrial towns. David will challenge a Goliath claimed by Plaid Cymru to be a sleeping giant, long swallowed up in the British dimension and little interested in affairs west of Offa's Dyke.

They point out that Labour's last two leaders, Michael Foot and James Callaghan, represented Welsh constituencies but were overwhelmed by Westminster. Neil Kinnock is viewed with deep suspicion, not least because of the allegations he made in the House of Commons a few years ago that children at an Anglesey school were refused permission to go to the lavatory unless they asked in Welsh. An inquiry by the local education authority found the case unproven but Kinnock made no retraction.

The nationalists are pinning their hopes on the credit they are receiving — few in Wales deny the claim — for helping the miners. At a rally in Cardiff's City Hall in October Thomas was introduced as 'the MP for the Welsh miners'. Kinnock has not attempted to claim that title. Whether the electors care remains to be seen. □

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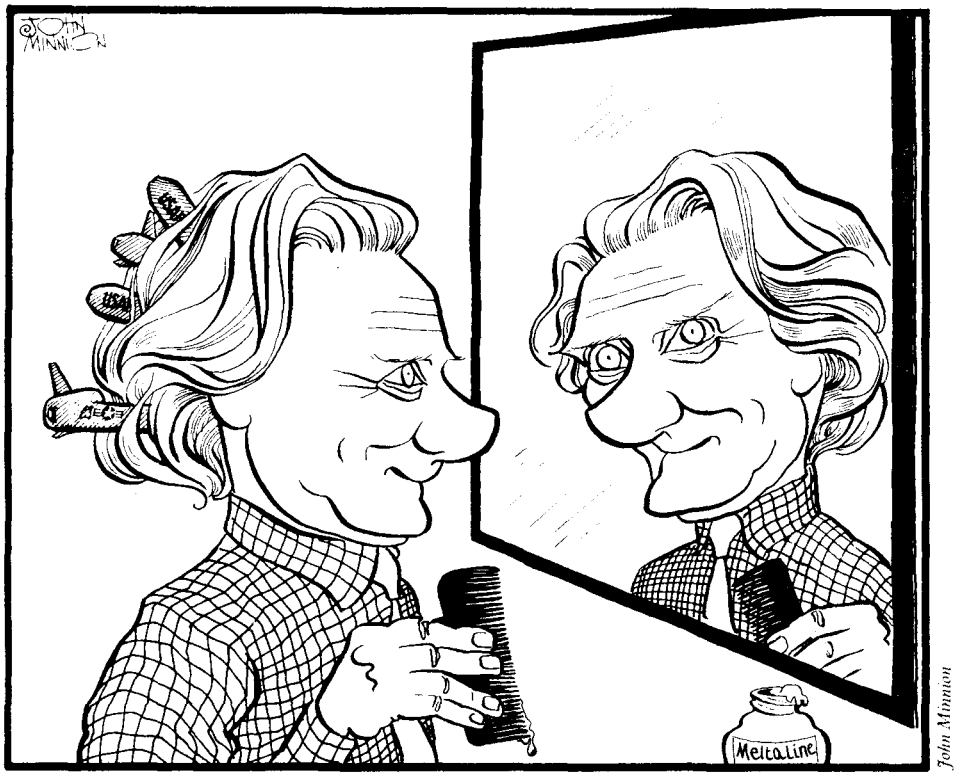

John Minnion

PEACE

RINGS FROM ROUNDABOUTS

Michael Heseltine has said the object of deploying cruise missiles is that they can 'melt into the countryside'. Cruisewatch, a CND-backed organisation, shows this is not true — as their immediate response to Tuesday's emergence of the cruise convoy showed. Polly Woolley reports

IT IS 1:15 on a Monday morning and the phone is ringing. I stagger to the kitchen with my eyes still closed to answer it. A crisp, clear voice from Newbury is speaking, telling me that Cruise is out. As an early link in the telephone tree, I have to get messages out as quickly as possible. Actually, the telephone network in Cruisewatch is more like a pool, with a stone dropped at the right place spreading out ripples across southern England, and as far north as Nottingham and Leicester. Of course, the wrong stone will send false ripples, and the powers that be know this. Several times a seemingly convincing message has sent people haring across the darkened countryside. We have to rely on voices we know and trust. Very real friendships grow up over the Cruisewatch telephone lines in the middle of the night.

Now I flick the coffee percolator on to make extra strong coffee and settle down to a night of phoning. But as soon as I get two calls out, my phone is cut off. I swear, and am frightened. We are all paranoiac about phone taps, but to talk light-heartedly (and, it must be confessed, a little proudly) about the certainty that our phones are tapped is one thing during daylight. When you are faced with the ominous silence in the middle of the night it is quite different. But this is not the first time this has happened, and there are two 'safe' houses where I know the people will let me use their phones. Mine will be back on in half-an-hour or so — just long enough out to be a damned nuisance.

I hurry round and carry on phoning, sending local people and others more remote to monitor roads and roundabouts. CND members are, we think, known for their niceness, but perhaps one never hears them being quite so consciously nice as when they are urged to get up and monitor Cruise at 1.30 on a cold, rainy night. I see the Cruisewatch as sending out little stabs of suddenly lit houses and cottages in small market towns and villages, with people sleepily dressing and making thermos flasks of hot coffee, piling into cars and driving off to remote roundabouts where Cruise may never go.

Yet those who see nothing can be as vital as those who do. One man had a boring night at a junction on a major road, periodically phoning in to report seeing nothing. Yet Cruise had gone through the next junction but one, and phone sitters were able to realise that it must have turned off at the intervening junction — the watcher there had been detained by the police. So Cruisewatch was effective — because someone had seen nothing.

Still at the 'safe' house, I periodically check my own phone. At first it sounds engaged, but after 20 minutes a sleepy flat-mate answers and agrees to hold the fort while I race home. Messages start to flood in almost immediately. Cruise is being tracked heading towards Salisbury Plain. Names that are rapidly becoming familiar, like Bullingdon Cross, the A303, crop up. A wrong name can cause endless problems for people driving through unknown territory in the early hours of the morning. Usually we give map references too.

Finally, about 3 o'clock, I hear the news. Cruise appears to have bedded down for the night at North Tidworth. People are moving into positions all around to be able to report on any movement. As usual they have been prevented by police from using the telephone boxes, although one bold soul, detained by police, asserted his right to a telephone call and promptly telephoned the position of the Cruise convoy to his nearest phone sitter. Once again we have proved our point. Mr Heseltine is wrong: Cruise *cannot* simply 'melt into the countryside'. If we can track it, then so can anyone else — including the Russians.

BUT FOR tonight the excitement seems to be over. I send a driver to collect our watchers, telephone the same advice to remoter regions, and go to bed.

At 4 o'clock I am woken again. It is some of our roundabout watchers. No Cruise vehicles, but several police minibuses returning. Is it worth mounting a regular watch, they ask, highly excited. It is. Increased police presence can be expected at Greenham when Cruise is due to return. Seeing police on their way will give us early warning. In the morning we must organise a roundabout watch. But now — bed.

On Wednesday the watch on the roundabout pays off. It is cold, dark and gusting with rain, but the watcher who phones me is jubilant. He has seen three police minibuses and a police landrover take the Newbury road. I discuss what to do with other sitters. We decide to alert Cruisewatch. In our opinion Cruise will come back to Greenham tonight and people will want to go down to meet it.

My calls made, I decide to go to Greenham myself. In the car we are all tense. Police have confiscated car keys at the gates before now, and we discuss ways we can keep ourselves mobile. Our unspoken fear is that we may have already missed the convoy.

But everything is quiet when we arrive at Greenham. I am worried that I may have sent people speeding through the midnight countryside on a false alarm. We discuss stopping at Blue Gate on the northern side, but instead opt for Yellow, the Main Gate, on the southern side. A gesture of female defiance, these rainbow names for the ugly metal gates. Even the police use them now.

And so we wait. Our men companions embarrassed, huddle by the car. We talk to them, then drift away for longer and longer periods by the fire, meeting old friends from other actions. We slip away into the bushes to pee, struggling with bulky coats and dungarees. The only time I suffer from penis envy is when I

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am on a camp.

And we wait. Suddenly a car drives up to the fire, a woman hanging out and shouting: 'They're coming! They're going in at Blue!' Some women climb into the car and they drive off. We debate her information. Other cars have been around and given us information that has proved false, but this woman seems reliable. We leap into our car and drive off round the back of the base. Behind us at Yellow, the women begin to build a barricade across the entrance with everything they can lay their hands on — including a portable loo.

As we come towards Blue, we see a long convoy of minibuses — about 20 — filled with police. They try to stop us, but we swing out wildly past them. But when we get to Blue, the camp seems quiet. We turn the car and hurtle back towards Yellow.

The police convoy is moving off; we are stuck behind it. A woman runs out from Indigo waving her arms, attempting to stop them. One of the minibuses stops, a policeman gets out and throws her against the fence with such contemptuous force that she bounces off and falls into the road, crying with pain. We stop and ask if we can help. She stares at our male driver with dull, bitter resentment and tells us to go away.

The police are at work stripping the barricade at Yellow, acting with an almost boyish glee — it all seems like a tremendous *Boy's Own* game to them. But for us it's deadly serious.

They drive off. We are surprised; after dismantling the barricades we expected them to wait for the convoy. But now a message comes from Blue — the convoy has gone there. We just missed it. Behind us, a wail goes up from a woman amid the ruins of the barricade, the eternal wail of woman — a comic despair.

'The Goddess! The Goddess is gone!'

The police have taken the portable loo. □

RACISM

LIVING UNDER SIEGE

Mosley's Blackshirts may be dead, but racist violence in London's East End continues. Mike Coren reports

THE *EAST END NEWS*, a radical and struggling newspaper covering the areas of Tower Hamlets, Newham and South Hackney, has currently been running the entire Oswald Mosley papers in its pages. The list of geriatric fascists makes for depressing and revealing reading, but some in East London question the relevance of such an action. Because the Blackshirts of 50 years ago and battles of Cable Street and Labour resistance are the stuff of socialist dreams; a less glamorous, just as bitter, struggle is going on today in the same alleys. And is receiving scant coverage.

Last May, Zubaida Motala did draw together some dramatic cases in the *New Statesman*. But often the reporting is left to *Searchlight*:

> Mr Ganga Dharan, a 58-year-old man, was attacked on 5 May outside the Tropicana Wine Bar around 9pm. He was jumped on by two white youths and was savagely beaten. As a result of the attack his jaw was fractured, both his arms were broken at the wrist (his left arm required an operation), his right ear required several stitches, his forehead was profusely swollen and blood clotted, both his knees were bruised, areas of his chest were bruised as a result of kicks and most of his teeth were kicked out . . .

The attack was treated by both police and the press as a case of simple robbery.

The racist Right has had a foothold in East London since the turn of the century, was organised into an anti-semitic campaign by the British Union of Fascists in the 1930s and since the second world war has been desperately in search of a cause. It found one in the new immigration from the Indian sub-continent. But what is perhaps even more disturbing is that the plethora of attacks, stabbings, stone throwings and insults which are committed in the East End are the work of 'ordinary' local youths, a tiny proportion of whom are members or fellow travellers of the enfeebled National Front and its offshoots.

The number and intensity of individual attacks is quite appalling. Fourteen-year-old Mukith Miah was set upon by a gang of white youths on his way home from school; he was stabbed twice, one cut being some ten inches long. Miah's mother was the victim of an assault with a metal plank two years ago. An Asian-owned shop in Canning Town was destroyed by what the police termed a 'motiveless arson attack'. After daubing the Islamic Centre in the same area a gang then set fire to it. Groups of up to 50 whites, with the help of others in the area, have terrorised Asian families in Stepney. The Race and Housing Action Team in Tower Hamlets set up by the GLC at the end of 1983 has received hundreds of complaints, 98 per cent of them concerning Bangladeshi victims. But a minority of incidents are reported.

The reason for the reluctance on the part of the Indians and Pakistanis in Newham and Bangladeshis in Tower Hamlets to report their attacks to the police is sadly obvious. Even when racist thugs are identified they are rarely prosecuted, and are even less likely to be convicted. But generally the police response is to inspect the damage and then depart, with the more zealous officers first making sure that their callers are 'legal' by checking their passports, and often threatening Asians with criminal charges for defending themselves.

Keith Tompson, spokesman for the locally based Workers Against Racism which operates a rota system for sitting with beseiged families and providing physical as well as verbal assistance, has been at the scene of the troubles for some time. 'The majority of incidents are what we now have to call trivial, because of the gravity of the others. That includes throwing stones, daubing and so on. Bad attacks, which we concentrate on, consist of assaults with knives, iron bars; petrol poured through letter boxes and then set alight. We are not talking of isolated cases here.'

Alongside the sporadic tradition of racism is the Labour council's heritage of inaction. This is partly due to the old style right-wing Labour attitudes, and partly to a confused, confusing stance from some Jewish members in East London who view their suffering in the past as a reason to be somewhat smug about contemporary black persecution.

The other section of the black community, the West Indians, is in a completely different situation. In Newham Asians make up around

Katalin Arkell/Network

Life in the East End: the safety of Asian families is seriously threatened

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18 per cent of the population, West Indians 10 per cent; the proportions in Tower Hamlets are not dissimilar. Although they are subject to the same instututional racism as Asians, West Indians are rarely physically attacked in the same manner. The reasons are obvious. Asians are seen as 'soft targets' by young gangs, whereas West Indians, whose entry into the worlds of music and sport have made them more acceptable to apathetic racists, are not.

Worse than this, relations between Asians and West Indians are not good, and cases of white and West Indian gangs attacking Asian houses have been reported. In September in East Ham after a 'fun day' organised by Newham Council as part of the borough's anti-racist year West Indian youths went on the rampage, looting Asian shops and attacking passers-by. Newham Race Relations Association said: 'It was a bad night for race relations.' The police, as per usual, denied that any racial motive existed.

THE SYNDROME is not unique. The relationship between blacks and Jews in the cities of the United States, which because of shared suffering should be empathetic and healthy, is fraught with antagonism. Unemployment and poverty provoke anger, and attacking the most accessible minority seems one way of releasing it. That does not, however, placate one Bengali shopkeeper who prefers not to be named. 'There should, there honestly should be some sort of partnership between us. That is not how it happens. I am more fearful of young black boys than of whites; I can usually tell a white racist when he comes into the shop or passes me on the street.'

Asian responses to overall racism have differed from area to area. In Newham, with its Indian and Pakistani community, political and physical organisation has begun to happen. This can range from young Asians involving themselves in martial arts classes — a vital factor in terms of their own confidence and the assumptions of their would be attackers — to political action. A concerted campaign was also started to help a group of Asians charged with conspiracy and affray after defending themselves against attack. Both *Searchlight* magazine and Zubaida Motala reported an incident where a partially disabled Asian youth, 16-year-old Parvinder Singh, was dragged into a car, taken to Wanstead Flats and assaulted with a hammer by two white men and a girl.

The day continued when 'two white men and a girl jumped out of a car and attacked 16-year-old Sohail Butt . . . Others attacked that day included an apprentice coming home from work in St Stephens Road, a youth in Plashet Road and a family shopping in Green Street.' When Asians and whites clashed outside a notorious fascist pub an Asian was arrested.

Matters may improve with a new, more open-minded, detective inspector at one of the Newham police stations, a growing awareness on the part of whites in Tower Hamlets and a growing determination on the part of Bangladeshis who have lost many of their street activists to committees and offices during the past five years. But as Fred Mallon of the *East End News* says: 'Unless you live in the area you cannot possibly appreciate what it is really like. There are people, in London, under siege. That cannot be allowed to go on.' □

SCOTLAND

EDINBURGH SQUARES UP

Rob Edwards looks at the Council's confrontation with the Scottish Office

WHEN EDINBURGH'S hung-over socialists surfaced on Friday 4 May, they still found it difficult to believe what had happened. At the previous day's local elections, the Labour Party had surprised everyone — most of all its own members — by winning outright control of Edinburgh District Council for the first time in history. The scale of the victory — a solid overall majority of six — shook the city's Conservative establishment to its roots.

Edinburgh has now been socialist for exactly six months. In that time, within the constraints of the previous Tory administration's budget, much has been achieved. Repair and maintenance work on council estates has been boosted by an extra half million pounds; 70 new staff have been employed as part of a £400,000 street-cleaning blitz; charges for swimming baths and sports facilities have been cut; an extra £90,000 has been found for buying much-needed library books and a new Womens' Committee has been established.

But now there are signs that the honeymoon is ending. As the new Labour Group embarks on the long and complex business of compiling its budget for next year, the enormity of its task is beginning to dawn. To fulfill its manifesto commitments, it is planning to increase total expenditure by £14 million to £50 million — which could cause a 25 per cent increase in Edinburgh's rates. A major confrontation with central government is inevitable.

Given the huge armoury of statutory powers now available to the Secretary of State for Scotland, George Younger, any confrontation is virtually certain to end up in legal action. As this prospect draws nearer, the Group's leaders — principally Alex Wood, Edinburgh's version of Ken Livingstone, and Jimmy Burnett, a veteran of Lothian Region's 1981 battle with central government — seem full of confidence. Some councillors, however, are beginning to worry about the absence of a detailed strategy of resistance, while a few admit to a feeling of rising panic.

The Scottish Office, on the other hand, is relishing the prospect of a fight it believes it will win. 'Edinburgh is being tactically inept,' one official told the *New Statesman*. 'If they rebel, the penalties available to the Secretary of State are so wide and so severe, that he can't possibly lose. It looks like Edinburgh is going to score the most massive own goal.'

It is just possible that this analysis is wrong, and that, like Liverpool, Edinburgh will ultimately be able to achieve a settlement that can be portrayed as a victory. But this will not happen unless Labour councillors gain a more realistic grasp of the options. It would be foolhardy to rely on the prospect of there being a general election in the next year — a scenario that is thought possible by the Group leadership. It is silly to keep talking about forcing the government to send in commissioners, when the very concept is regarded as irrelevant and unnecessary by the Scottish Office.

Unlike in England and Wales, under Section 211 of the 1973 Local Government (Scotland) Act, the Secretary of State has a very general default power, which he can use to force any local authority to carry out a specific statutory duty. This was successfully used to force 17 councils to increase rents in 1973; and three councils to sell council houses in 1980 and 1981. According to Scottish Office sources, the Secretary of State is 'virtually certain' to use this 'sledgehammer power', if Edinburgh continues on its present course.

The crunch will come not on the proposed level of rates, but on the council's housing budget. Next year for the first time it will be illegal for the council to plan to spend more on housing from the rates than the government wishes. Edinburgh's draft housing budget envisages £26.5 million coming from the rates — a massive £24 million in excess of the government's provisional limit. By January, when an order giving statutory force to the limit will be laid before Parliament, it is probable that Edinburgh will have revised its spending estimates downwards and that, after consultations, the government will have marginally increased its limit; but it is inconceivable that Edinburgh will not still be planning spending far in excess of the limit. The likely result is that February's full council meeting will be asked to agree on a clearly illegal budget.

THIS HAS BEEN explicitly recognised as the 'inevitable outcome' of policies already agreed by the Labour Group. Most — but not all — councillors are confident that, when it comes to February's crucial vote, the Group will vote overwhelmingly in favour of illegality and avoid this kind of damaging split that spoilt the last days of Lothian Region's battle.

In March the Secretary of State is likely to start the cumbersome four-month default procedure. This involves a local public inquiry, a statutory order and then, if the council is still refusing to comply, a case before Scotland's senior court, the Court of Session. Defiance of the court's decision would put the council in contempt of court. Since the conflict would then be between the council and the law, instead of the council and the government, ministers judge that they would be in a 'Scargill situation' and would start winning the propaganda battle.

While the default procedure is running its course, the Secretary of State is likely to bring into play his other recently acquired powers to control local authority expenditure. He could decide that Edinburgh's spending is 'excessive and unreasonable' and forcibly determine the council's rate poundage. He could use the administrative tool of cutting back the amount the council is allowed to borrow to fund capital expenditure on housing. And the council could even be facing legal action under an 1868 Act from a well-organised group of local ratepayers.

It is also possible that the Secretary of State could later decide to 'claw back' the district's rate support grant — as he did with the Tory administration's budget earlier this year. Only

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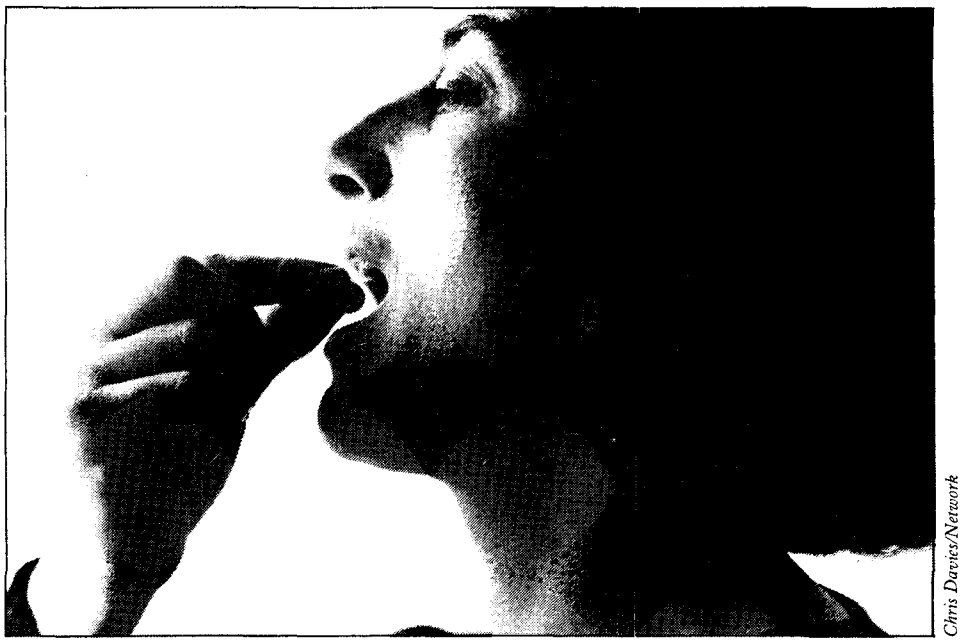
this time it is likely that he will claw back the *entire* grant, leaving Edinburgh in the extraordinary position of trying to find virtually all its expenditure from rates and rents.

Recognising that housing is likely to be the major battleground, both sides are already rehearsing their arguments. Labour leaders point out that the amount spent on council housing from the rates is far lower in Edinburgh than in the other cities: £48 per house — compared to £174 in Dundee, £208 in Glasgow and £235 in Aberdeen. They justify their manifesto commitment to freeze rents on the basis that Edinburgh's rents are among the highest in Scotland.

It is impossible to predict who will win the battle for Edinburgh. The new Labour councillors are committed, imaginative and full of youthful energy. The Scottish Office makes up the rules and has played the game many times before. In the last resort, Labour's fate depends on how much support it can mobilise amongst its natural allies. □



Chris Davies/Network

'What are you prescribing? What will it do to me? What are the side-effects?'

HEALTH

SWALLOWING IT IN SILENCE

Let patients decide on the risk of drugs argues Jad Adams

IT COULD be put in the form of an Anglo-Saxon riddle: Those who buy me do not use me, those who choose me do not buy me, those who use me neither buy, nor select, nor understand me though I can change their lives. What am I?

The answer is a prescription drug from a British pharmacist where the people in most ignorance about a product are the patients taking it.

This is despite EEC regulations, existing in British law as the Medicines (leaflets) Regulations 1977. If pharmaceutical companies tell patients anything about a drug they are obliged to provide a leaflet giving full information about the effects, contra-indications, side effects, precautions and warnings of the drug. However, if they prefer to, the companies can opt for an alternative — which is to give absolutely no information at all.

The alternatives were written in to the original EEC directive in accordance with the wishes of two major interest groups: the pharmaceutical industry and the doctors who both argued that patient compliance would go down when major but rare side effects were juxtaposed with minor, common ones. There was also concern about interference in the doctor's exclusive right to communicate with patients about their condition.

One group of companies, the oral contraceptive manufacturers, decided to blaze a trail — which has not subsequently been followed — and issue complete patient information leaflets in 1979 to the three million women using the pill. The Family Planning Association graph shows that pill use is jumpy and reactive to every media scare but it showed no flicker when the leaflets were introduced.

FEARS THAT patients will stop using their medicines just because they know what they might do have been undermined by the work of Professor George and Professor Waters in Southampton who ran a pilot study with patients taking anti-arthritis drugs and penicillin which found: 'Patients who received a leaflet were more likely to be completely satisfied with their treatment and with the information they had been given. They were also more likely to know the name of their medicine and much more aware of potential unwanted effects.' (*British Medical Journal*)

But in the meantime, patients are left in ignorance and if there is a safety scare drugs are whisked off the market, either by the drug watch-dog, the Committee on Safety of Medicines, or by companies fearing enforced withdrawal, with no apparent thought for the patients taking them. In the past two years we have seen the withdrawal of Opren, Zelmid, Osmosin, Zomax, Flosint, Flenac, Tandacote, Tanderil and restrictions of the phenylbutazone range.

Many of these restrictions were more than justified but as Dr Bill Inman said about Zomax, there was no consideration for 'some 400 patients with terminal cancer, many of whom suffered severely when the drug, which was unusually effective in controlling pain from secondary deposits in bone, was withdrawn.'

Dr Inman was a Principal Medical Officer at the DHSS and was one of the originators of the yellow card system of adverse reaction reporting where doctors send in reports of reactions observed in patients. No longer a civil servant and so free to speak, Dr Inman now heads the Drug Surveillance Research Unit at Southampton where he has pioneered a new method of identifying drug risks — and benefits.

Prescription Event Monitoring relies on the 'green card' on which prescribing doctors record events which occur to a patient while taking a drug. This means not only is an obviously drug induced rash recorded but also such things as a patient breaking a leg. Although this may seem unconnected with the drug, if it occurs to many patients it suggests the drug may be having an adverse effect on the patients' central nervous system making them more liable to fall or causing metabolic bone changes rendering the bones more liable to break.

This system, which has already had the involvement of 75 per cent of all GPs in England, allowed Dr Inman to study 10,000 Zomax patients for eight months — before and after withdrawal of the drug. The drug was withdrawn in America following its use by 15 million people of whom five died of anaphylactic shock (an extreme allergy similar to toxic shock). There had been no deaths in Britain but because there had been a media outcry in the US (a relative of one of the dead people was the owner of a television network) the manufacturers Ortho-Cilag withdrew it in Britain as well as in the US in March 1983. If there is one thing drug companies do not like it is bad publicity.

But Prescription Event Monitoring produced a surprising result. Zomax appeared to have a protective influence against heart attack and stroke. There was only one death from these causes while the patients were on Zomax but 26 in the same group after the drug's withdrawal. Comparison with the background mortality for this age group shows this was not a rebound effect due to withdrawal from the drug.

Did anyone — drug company or government

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agency or doctor — ask Zomax patients if they would be prepared to accept a one in three million potential risk of death fron anaphylactic shock in return for the benefits of the drug? For terminal cancer patients the risks may seem acceptable.

THE STORY of Opren, the drug for severe arthritis, is more complicated. The delayed removal of the drug from the bodies of elderly people — because of their slower metabolisms — led to the build up of the chemical which caused the liver, skin and nail side effects and the drug's association with 76 deaths.

Regardless of this, doctors and patients wrote to the medical and lay press after Opren's withdrawal saying they or their patients would rather have accepted the risks and continued taking the drug because of the relief it gave them from the perpetual agony of arthritis. If your release from constant pain contains a risk of death you may accept that risk — if you are asked.

The obvious way to pick up side effects before people have died is simply to involve the patients themselves. They know what is happening to them and they should be allowed to report it. However, Professor David Grahame-Smith's Working Party on Adverse Reactions (Committee on Safety of Medicines) rejected patient reporting on the grounds that: 'It is essential for the Committee to have the expert opinion of the doctor treating the patient as to whether the condition suffered by the patient was likely to be an adverse reaction to a drug.'

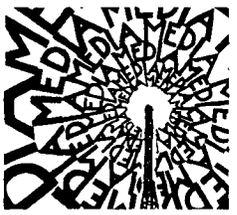
But as the rate of reporting of adverse reactions is only ever reckoned at 1 per cent and sometimes much lower, perhaps the expert opinion of the doctor needs a little support from the patients. Moreover, drug reaction reporting should be looking not at recognisable adverse drug reactions but — as in Prescription Event Monitoring — at all symptoms while the drug is being taken, even if they include a continuous feeling of wellbeing or an absence of travel sickness. Adverse reactions alone cannot be relied upon.

Some doctors are meanwhile attempting to introduce a two way dialogue with their patients including the use of a new card, produced by the Consumers Association's Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin, informing them they have a new drug to which there may be side effects which are still unrecognised.

'You could help to uncover such effects if you report to your doctor *any* new symptom or *any* unexpected effect that develops while you are taking the drug, or within a month or so of stopping it.'

One such pioneering GP, Dr Laurence Pike of the Birchfield Medical Centre, Birmingham, uses these cards and patient information booklets. He says: 'I will think I have arrived when each patient says "What are you prescribing? Why? What will it do to me? Do I really need it? What are the side effects?" and then maybe comes back and tells me something about its effects next time'. Would that there were more doctors like him. □

Jad Adams, Associate Producer with Meditel Productions, is now working on a series of documentaries on health care in right-wing, left-wing and mixed economy countries.



Happy Birthday, Channel Four

John Ellis

EVERY COUNTRY's television is insular; but none is more so than Britain's. Secure in the belief that 'British television is the best in the world', our television output through the 'Seventies became formulaic and predictable. The arrival of Channel 4, two years ago and celebrating its birthday this week, promised to change this scene radically. Suddenly, British audiences were faced with a whole new Channel packed with unfamiliar material. And the shock of the new was too much. There were storms over bad language; over left-wing bias; over boredom, even. And, two years on, most of the contentious material has quietly disappeared from the new Channel.

But was it the British public who were outraged by the new Channel? How did it happen that Channel 4 retreated from its initial policy of 'blanket innovation' towards a more cautious policy of compensating for each slight innovation with a massive concession to presumed audience tastes? The public had little to do with it.

The single main influence on Channel 4's change of tactics was the British press. The press carried on a campaign of 'stormovers' (as the Channel 4 press office began to call them), prompted by various right-wing interest groups. Perhaps the press view was conditioned by the fact that Channel 4 offered a new competitor for advertising revenues. Whatever their real reasons may be, the most astounding aspect of the whole affair is that Channel 4's management, and not a few independent programme producers, took what the press said as being what the audience felt. There are some people, perhaps, who still believe that our press is a manifestation of public opinion, but in a parallel sector of media production, it is disconcerting to find such a misconception so widely credited.

The main reason for this attitude is the extraordinary isolation of broadcasters from their audiences. A meagre statistical survey of 7000 metred television sets, backed up by some interview work, produces the only systematic collection of audience views available. The main aim of this survey (the BARB figures) is to present 'top 20s' of programmes, and to begin to divine some of the demographics of particular programmes — their audience profiles. Compared to the USA, where the collection of such statistics is a major industry, British approaches are small scale. However, programmes are axed or retained according to what these figures claim to reveal. For everything else is highly contingent and specific — like letters or phone calls to the Duty Officers. These calls, of complaint or approbation, can have an immediate impact as the record of them is widely circulated within broadcasting organisations, on the day after the broadcast. The statistics take anything up to two weeks to arrive.

This highly attenuated process of feedback is the only direct link that broadcasters have with their audiences. So it is no wonder that broadcasters look towards the press to find at least something that will compensate for that terrible feeling of having slaved away on a programme that just disappears into the void. But when you see the quality of much of this criticism, it does give pause for thought. For television criticism is allocated a very small place in the output of print journalism. It has a far smaller place in this magazine for instance, than reviews of books.

This is by no means untypical of the 'serious press'; the *Sunday Times* has even abandoned its television review column in the favour of recycled press releases for forthcoming programmes, leavened with the occasional consideration of a genre of programme production. With this general lack of attention to television output, it's really not surprising that television criticism has failed to develop as a sustained and informed critique of television output.

Broadcasters have lived with this lack of press analysis for a long time. It became a serious matter when Channel 4 was launched, as television reviewers and general pundits (with all too few exceptions) were woefully unprepared for the reality of Channel 4's ambitious initial project: to change the face of British television, unshaken in any real way for more than a decade. All that our reviewers had to compare this new output with was the three British channels. Inevitably, Channel 4 failed to match up.

No reviewer writing at that time was able to compare Channel 4's news and current affairs output with any other nation's output in this area (apart from American television). This lack of comparison is a major aspect of the insularity of British television. Strangely, this is beginning to change, perhaps as a result of Channel 4's arrival, but through the medium of BBC2. Their recent series of excerpts from foreign television coverage of Britain, called (with magnificent indignation) *Do They Really Mean Us?*, began to offer a series of news and current affairs formats and perceptions that differed radically from our own. Pushed a little further, such programmes could uncover the implicit values and approaches of British television. Then perhaps critics will be able to accept and understand more readily the kind of experiments that Channel 4 began to offer two years ago. Then perhaps Channel 4 will begin to commission them again.

John Ellis is an independent producer, currently making Visions, *Channel 4's programme about cinema.*

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DIARY

Claudia Wright

Washington

A club I belong to in Washington has been trying to raise funds for the Mondale-Ferraro campaign by publishing a collection of the members' recipes under the title: 'How to cook Reagan's goose'. In theory it was a fine idea, but in retrospect too many of the recipes relied for their flavouring on pepper and salt — this year it's clear the swinging voters all prefer mustard. When I first came to Washington, there was only one kind of mustard available — a thin, bilious yellow sauce that was squirted out of plastic nozzles on to hot dogs and hamburger buns. But times have changed. Nowadays Americans don't use pepper and salt — they use 'food enhancers' and mustards have become upwardly mobile. In my local food shop there is a wall of mustards — Arizona Champagne Mustard, New York Blueberry Mustard, Dry Creek Fume Blanc Mustard, Pommery, Russian etc., etc. In fact, Americans will spend more money — $100 million — on their mustard this year than the Mondale-Ferraro or Reagan campaigns have spent on running for President. And, if I need a pick-me-up on election day, my local wineshop has invited me to a tasting of the latest Chardonnay mustards from California. I think I'll go.

○

A political cloud watcher might claim to have spotted three silver linings in Mondale's impending defeat. One is that no matter how large the Reagan victory, the Republican Party won't enjoy a comparable mandate in Congress — maybe a net gain of 20 seats in the House of Representatives (less than the Democratic gain in 1982) and a net loss of between two and four seats in the Senate. In other words, a Reagan win means a personal victory, not a party or an ideological triumph that would allow the President a powerful legislative hand next year. The second silver lining is that the domestic economy is likely to sink into another recession at about the same time US military exercises in Central America finally become the real thing — war. This will allow the Democrats to win the mid-term Congressional campaign of 1986 with a resounding 'we told you so'. The third silver lining is that after Reagan is re-elected, he will be a lame duck — constitutionally barred from running again, and too old and too lazy to fight the battles with Congress which a repeat of his first-team military spending policies would require, and which his erstwhile successors may be too nervous to endorse.

○

It's true there are a few Congressional campaigns where the electorate looks likely to see through the Republican Party's cant, even when this is dressed up in drag. In Denver, Colorado, for example, Democratic Congresswoman, Patricia Shroeder, is being opposed by Mary Downs, a successful stock-broker who is making her first political race. It has been a frustrating campaign for Downs because she would like to attack Shroeder, a member of the Armed Services Committee and a military 'reformer' in the Gary Hart mould, for being soft on defence. So far, however, Downs hasn't been able to identify a single defence issue on which she would have cast her vote differently from Schroeder. So as a last resort she recently attacked Shroeder, who is also on the Judiciary Committee, by saying that in the period the Congresswoman has sat on the committee, there have been thousands more rapes every year.

○

Representative Howard Wolpe of southern Michigan is one of a disappearing type — liberal Democrats who haven't renounced their past beliefs in the columns of the *Atlantic* or the *New Republic*. As a consequence, he is facing just about everything the Reaganites can legally throw at their domestic enemies. Wolpe has been targeted by the national Republican party, by the even more right-wing National Conservative Political Action Committee, and by one of the nuttiest representatives in Congress — Mark Siljander from the district next to Wolpe's — who has written to Christian clergymen in Wolpe's electorate urging them to ensure that another Christian gets elected. Wolpe is Jewish.

To counteract his appeal among women voters — Wolpe was one of the House sponsors of the Equal Rights Amendment — the Republicans have put up Jacqueline McGregor, a former school teacher. She has

attacked Wolpe as un-American, soft on communism, and in his role as chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, a supporter of Marxist regimes. None of this has been particularly effective, so the Republicans have narrowed their campaign down to a theme that borrows from the liberal Democratic rhetoric — it's time, they say, to send more women to Congress. McGregor has sent her three photogenic daughters out to gather the women's vote with a handbill they've written themselves entitled 'Why my mother should go to Congress'.

○

I'm sceptical, however, about the silver lining theory, if only because the future alternatives to Reagan in the Republican Party are so much worse. Better a fumbling old fanatic with a concentration span of less than 90 minutes, than Jack Kemp, the upstate New York Republican representative, whose Mister Feelgood act is almost as good as Reagan's, and whose youthful fanaticism is more than a match for the group currently in the White House.

A despairing Democratic fundraiser tells me that, unless his party finds another way to raise funds, he expects the money men on whom the candidates depend will demand that Mondale's successor look and sound identical to the Republicans. He sees a grim alternative: either men in the traditional Democratic mould — New York Governor Mario Cuomo, for example — learn to sing a new tune, or else the Republicans will annihilate them. But perhaps there is a Democratic candidate in the wings, with the youth to match Kemp, a State Governor's two terms to equal Reagan's in California, Republican credentials to attract 'cross-over' votes, and the money to outspend any Democrat in the field. Who might this wonder boy be? Why, John D. Rockefeller IV. The 47-year-old Rockefeller is 6 feet 7 inches tall, better looking than his uncle Nelson, the late Republican Vice-President, and disarmingly frank. Christened John, nicknamed Jay and given the choice by his father whether or not to adopt the family's dynastic name, he happily did so, explaining later: 'If I was John D. Smith IV, where would I be?' This year he will win a Senate seat for West Virginia. By the end of September he had spent just over $8 million on the campaign, and by election day he is likely to exceed the $9 million his last race for Governor cost.

ROGER WODDIS

Beating the dog

'We must remember the old maxim that you must always judge a man by his friends'. — Peter Walker, Energy Secretary, on the visit to Libya by an NUM official.

Let us all express our horror,
Roll our eyes and throw a fit,
Thanking God for certain tyrants
And the crimes that they commit:
Any stick to beat a dog with,
Any spoon to stir the shit.

Here's a chance to link Gadafy
Terror and a Yorkshire tyke.
Oh, the shame of shackled unions!
Oh, the despot we dislike!
We, of course, adore our workers
And defend their right to strike.

Guilty by association —
Deal with pitch and be defiled —
Shake hands, though, with favoured monsters
Whom we found to be quite mild.
(Did you see that shot of Botha
Beaming at a coloured child?)

If we fail with eager judges,
Shoving miners in the nick,
Fines and cops and commentators,
Hunger and the heavy stick —
Well, there's always press hysteria:
That, at least, should so the trick.

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THE WAR AGAINST 'COMMUNISM'

From the 'betrayal' of Vietnam to a glossy magazine and the World Anti-Communist League, to a secret Pentagon committee, military men are pursuing their war against enemies of US power. Chris Horrie delves into their violent world and its top-level connections

WELCOME TO the wonderful world of *Soldier of Fortune*, the Colorado based magazine for 'professional adventurers'. Its pages are full of lurid colour photos of mutilated bodies; advertisements for Waffen-SS uniforms and rings; caps emblazoned with human skulls; advertisements for axes, daggers, silencers and mass combat machine guns.

Alongside the pictures, the text celebrates the lives and sub-culture of mercenaries, and spotlights the most sadistic excesses of military 'special operations' all over the Third World. 'We give you a view from over the rifle sights', boasts executive editor Dale Dye. 'If getting such stories involves active participation on the part of *SoF* correspondents, don't expect any apologies or quibbles'.

Doubtless the vast majority of *SoF*'s claimed 190,000 readers cough up an annual $6 million for the voyeuristic thrill of peeking through those rifle sights. Or perhaps they just want the chance to snap up mail-order offers like video tape copies of Nuremberg rallies or 'a unique bizarre trophy for your den or gameroom. Human skull pierced by 12" dagger! Genuine human skull (*not* plastic) zapped by US Marine Corps combat knife . . . Mind Boggling!' Your skull, guaranteed to have between 18 and 25 teeth, will arrive within 21 days for only $149.

Gruesome titillation of this sort may bring in the Big Bucks. But there's more to *SoF* than boasting and machismo.

SOF AND THE organisations of former CIA operatives, paramilitary and unconventional warfare specialists which back up the magazine represent a formidable secret army. Linked to Latin death squads and a world wide network of fanatical anti-communist organisations, *SoF*'s operations follow the tradition, but on a large international and professional scale, of the Frei Corps of Weimar Germany.

Now, as then, it is the 'weakness' and restraints of democracy which entices these men, many of them psychopathic and obsessional, into carrying out violent and conspiratorial acts. If 'pinko-liberal' elected representatives refuse to smash communists and guerillas officially, then these men will do it unofficially, and with relish. Their current choice field is central America, where they are both fighting and training young men how to fight a dirty war. That they act as agents for the US government's secret war must now be beyond doubt. The most prominent of this group, John K Singlaub, is chairman of a secret Pentagon committee on central America.

Many of this band of men gained their experience and beliefs in Vietnam. The magazine's publisher and general editor is Robert K Brown, US Army Rangers (rtd), a tough looking, middle aged man, often pictured in the pages of his magazine toting a machine gun around the battlefields of Southern Africa and Central America, wearing the inevitable dark glasses.

Brown describes himself as a leader of Special Forces teams in Vietnam, Graduate of the US Army Command and General Staff College and a big game hunter.

In the '50s Brown served with the US Army's highly secretive counterintelligence corps. In the '60s he was reportedly involved with training Cuban exiles at the time of the Bay of Pigs and worked with American support group for '5-commando', the group of European mercenaries fighting in the Congo. Covert action expert Jim Hogan says that Brown 'has functioned near the centre of America's most violent intrigues, usually as an "advisor" or 'journalist".'

In Vietnam Brown served with the top secret Special Operations Group (SOG) which specialised in recruiting and training North Vietnamese for operations against the Viet Cong. They were sent in by President Kennedy who wanted to defeat the Viet Cong quickly and easily. According to former SOG Chief Col Charles Simpson III, Kennedy 'directed that a campaign of clandestine warfare be waged in

Lt Col Robert K Brown

1954: Graduates from US Army Staff College. Joins Counter-intelligence Corps. **1957:** Leaves army to study political science at University of Colorado. Field work takes him to Cuba. **1961:** Reported to have trained with exile Cubans in preparation for 'Bay of Pigs' invasion. In early '60s is advisor to Marvin Liebman of ACAKFF (American Committee for Aid to Katanga Freedom Fighters) which organises support for '5-Commando', European mercenaries in the Congo. **1963:** Is approached by Dr Stanley L Drennen of the neo-Nazi National states Rights Party to organise 'a group of young men to get rid of Kennedy, the cabinet and maybe 10,000 other people'. Brown refuses. Incident comes to light in FBI investigation of Kennedy assassination. **1966:** Re-joins Army and works under Gen John K Singlaub in Special Operations Group in South East Asia. **1975:** Accused by ZANU of recruiting mercenaries to fight in Rhodesia through his short-lived company, Phoenix Associates. Denies charge. **1975:** Forms new company, Omega group to launch *Soldier of Fortune* magazine. Joins Singlaub's Special Operations Association. From now on is often pictured carrying weapons in Central America, Israel, Southern Africa, Afghanistan, USA. **1979:** Writes *Merc: The American Soldier of Fortune* with Jay Mallin of *T ime* magazine. **1983:** Is pictured 'checking the in-tray of the Grenadian Minister of Defence' in ransacked Grenadian government buildings during US invasion.

SoF pictures Brown training local youths to fight for America's interest in El Salvador

MOURNING MARIO

The Good Die Young

by Steve Salisbury

ABOVE: SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown and Mario during August '83 SOF trip to Morazan. Photo: Ralph Edens RIGHT: This photograph of Mario appeared in SOF's January '84 issue, which became Mario's most treasured possession. Photo: Ralph Edens

the evil of communism and had the courage to die fighting it," Cruz remarked.

If only the U.S. Congress had Mario's courage, maybe there would be peace in El Salvador now.

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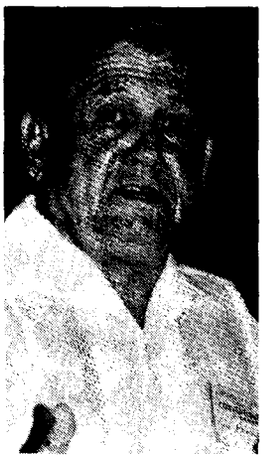

Left, Hans Scharff with son John at the 1983 SoF convention. Scharff was billed as the 'Luftwaffe's master interrogator' Above: SoF's Heine Aderhott who sits on the Pentagon Central America policy panel

Vietnam, conducted by Vietnamese agents directed and trained by the CIA and American Special Forces'.

As the war deteriorated the reputation of Special Forces advocates grew in Washington. SOG, according to the January 1980 *SoF* had 'warned against increased, large-scale US involvement in the traditional military concept', smaller scale guerilla and political warfare would be of more use. In 1965 Special Forces pioneer Paul Vann, who had resigned from his post as a Saigon military advisor in 1963, returned to Vietnam triumphant.

The following year SOG activities reached something of a peak. The man who directed the secret war was General John K. Singlaub responsible for two 'progammes' of particularly dirty action called Omega and Phoenix. According to Mike Beamon, who served with the US Navy SEALs (Sea, Air and Land guerillas): 'The Phoenix programme was very carefully designed to disrupt the infrastructure of the Viet Cong village system.'* Many of their operations were directly orchestrated by the CIA. The overall director of the Phoenix programme was William Colby. Colby is now the director of the CIA.

One man who thought Phoenix went too far was Lt Col Anthony Herbert who served with US Special Forces in Vietnam and joined SOG in November 1965. 'They wanted me to take charge of execution teams that wiped out entire families and tried to make it look as though the VC themselves had done the killing', he says in his book *Soldier*.

SOG continued its activities right up to the end of the war. They sponsored civic aid, medical programmes, farming and propaganda operations. They trained hundreds of Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians in guerilla and 'black' unconventional operations. But it was all too late. At the end of the war in 1974, Brown, Singlaub and the other SOG men were bitter, convinced that their strategy had not failed, but been betrayed.

Worse, in the wake of Watergate and with the coming of President Carter, restrictions were placed on the CIA and Army unconventional warfare activities. It was time to regroup.

WITHIN A year Brown had established *SoF*. Ex-SOG men John Donovan and Heine Aderholt were appointed 'Explosives Editor' and 'Unconventional Warfare Editor' respectively. The magazine was used to promote General Singlaub's Special Operations Association, also founded in 1975, an invite-only club for former SOG members. Mitch Werbell's Corbray School, a para-military training camp was also prominently advertised. Werbell too, had worked closely with Singlaub and Brown in Vietnam.

Early editions of *SoF* concentrated on South Africa and Rhodesia, 'This Embattled Outpost of European Civilization' as the magazine puts it. In June 1975, Tapson Mawere, ZANU representative in the US, claimed that Brown and others had sent some 400 mercenaries to Rhodesia. Brown denied the charge claiming to have merely been providing information. His story was backed by State Department official Temple Cole. But as late as August 1980 Brown was claiming in *SoF* that he and his staff were off to Rhodesia to 'kill terrs'.

Whilst *SoF* activity in Southern Africa and Central America resembles SOG-style operations from the Vietnam era, *SoF* and Singlaub have also mounted a powerful political campaign promoting the idea of a larger consolidated SOG to wage unconventional warfare not only against insurgents, but within 'hostile' countries, including the Soviet Bloc.

The campaign is boosted at regular *SoF* and Special Operations Association conventions, banquets and re-unions. Leading serving military people frequently attend. Singlaub has become deeply involved in a number of very powerful right-wing political lobby groups. He is vice-chairman of the Coalition for Peace through Strength which, with a turnover of tens of millions a dollar each year, is probably the single most influential lobby group in the USA. It has successfully campaigned against anti-military congresspersons, got its anti-peace movement documentaries shown on TV and framed Congress resolutions declaring US national strategy to be the 'overall military and technological superiority over the USSR.' On 3 September this year, Singlaub became

**Everything we had: An oral history of the Vietnam War* by Mike Beamon, Random House 1981

General John K Singlaub

1942: Graduates from University of California. Joins US infantry then Office of Strategic Services (OSS) forerunner of CIA. **1944:** Sent to China, trains with Kuomintang for ops against Japan. **1948:** Working on China desk at CIA. **Aug 1949-Oct 1950:** Whereabouts unknown. **Oct 1950:** Helps establish US Army Ranger training base at Fort Benning, Georgia. **1951:** Deputy chief of CIA station, Korea. **1952:** Working on faculty of Army Command and General Staff College. **1957-May 1966:** Whereabouts unknown. **May 1966:** Sent to Vietnam as Commander, Joint Unconventional Warfare Task Force. Later reveals that he took over, at this time, Command of Secret MACVSOG Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group or SOG. **Aug 1968-Oct 1969:** Whereabouts unknown. **Oct 1969:** Creates US Army MASSTER programme at Fort Hood (Modern Army Selected Systems Test Evaluation and Review). **1971:** Staff of Directorate of Plan, Studies and Budget Office of Dept. Chief of Staff for Personnel, US Army. **1975:** Helps Robert Brown launch *Soldier of Fortune* magazine. Helps form Special Operations Association. **July 1976:** Returns to Korea as Chief of Staff, UN Forces. **June 1977:** Sacked as Chief of Staff, UN Forces Korea by President Carter for publicly opposing administration policy. Notes that MacArthur was sacked too, calls him a 'prophet' and says 'communism is a global conspiracy against freedom'. **July 1977:** Becomes Chief of Staff, US Forces Command (FORSCOMM). **June 1978:** Resigns, again criticising Carter's policies and SALT-II in particular. **1978:** Becomes head of North American Regional World Anti-Communist League. **1979:** Becomes founder member of the Coalition for Peace through Strength. Calls Presidential election 'that big dove-shoot in November'. **June 1982:** Speaking tour of Europe. Visits Munich HQ of Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations (ABN). Tells Yarislav Stesko (head of wartime 'independent' government in Ukraine, now head of ABN) that his aim is 'the final and unequivocal demise' of communism. **Jan 1984:** Tours El Salvador. **Sept 1984:** Becomes head of World Anti-Communist League (HQ in Taipei, Taiwan). **Oct 1984:** As chairman of Pentagon policy penal on Central America, recommends extension of covert, paramilitary and unconventional warfare role for US forces in Central America.

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chairman of the World Anti-Communist League, an organisation whose Latin American affiliate, the Latin American Anti-Communist Confederation was described this year by the Washington Post as 'the umbrella group for active and dormant death squads throughout Latin America.' Peter Dally of WACL's British affiliate, says this Latin American branch was expelled from WACL two years ago.

From having been a 'simple soldier', Singlaub is now a missionary for an international war against communism. In a speech to WACL's North American branch in April 1982, Singlaub warned that though it could be difficult 'for impatient Americans' they had to be prepared for a prolonged conflict in Central America. 'We must also recognise that if we permit the terrorists a sanctuary in Nicaragua or elsewhere we will be adding an unnecessary handicap to the situation and will be increasing the probability of a Communist victory.' He went on to stress the urgency of US covert support and unconventional warfare support for freedom fighters in Southern Africa, Afghanistan, South East Asia and the 'captive nations of Eastern Europe.'

His speech was reported in ABN correspondence, journal of the Munich and New York based Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, an umbrella group for exiled nationalist groups from the Soviet bloc.

SUCH VIEWS and desires are not that remarkable in American soldiers. What is is the official responsibility Singlaub has been given to implement them. Reliable Pentagon sources have given the *New Statesman* details of a Top Secret Defence Department document listing members of a special Pentagon policy panel set up earlier this year to review Central American military policy. General Singlaub is chairman of the panel. Heine Aderhold, *SoF*'s 'Unconventional Warfare Editor' is also a member.

The panel's report, still classified Top Secret, was presented to Under Secretary of Defence for Policy, Fred C Ikle last week. It calls for 'extended use of unconventional, covert and paramilitary operations in Central America'.

Whilst this revelation is certain to cause a new political storm it is really nothing more than an extension of the policy that the US has employed over the past two or three years.

On 1 September of this year two US citizens were killed when their US supplied helicopter was shot down by Nicaraguan forces during a raid from neighbouring Honduras. Nicaraguan defence minister Humberto Ortega immediately charged that the men were 'mercenaries hired by the CIA'. Sen. Daniel Moynihan, vice-chair of the Senate committee which oversees CIA activity, said he thought this 'unlikely', adding that, in his opinion, the men were probably volunteers recruited through the pages of *Soldier of Fortune*.

Three weeks later the CIA was forced to admit that it uses the services of 'contract employees' in Central America. The slip came as the agency beat a hasty retreat from a major row over a manual used to train anti-Sandinista guerilla in assassination, kidnap, terrorism and blackmail.

The CIA claimed the manual had been prepared by a 'low-level contract employee', a claim repeated by Reagan, during his TV debate with Mondale. Beth Benton of Georgetown University's Central American Historical Institute told the *New Statesman* that an earlier edition of the manual has been circulating in Nicaragua for some months. The new edition, she said, 'is confirmed to be used by the CIA in training what are called guerilla students'.

SoF makes no secret of its role in training those guerilla students. On 20 May 1984, the magazine sent an 11 man team to Morazan Province, El Salvador. Their mission was to train a recently formed Salvadoran military unit officially entitled the 'Reagan anti-terrorist battalion' in guerilla and unconventional warfare technique.

The magazine's June edition featured 'Atlactl Assault: *SoF* in combat with El Salvador's Elite Immediate Reaction Battalion'. 'Thanks to *SoF*', staff writer Peter Kokalis boasted in it, 'the Atlactl has the best sniper programme in the whole El Salvador Army'.

SoF asserts that its training teams are made up of unpaid volunteers, supported by their own or *SoF*'s money. But where '*SoF*'s money' comes from its something of a mystery.

Soon after the magazine was set up in 1975 it became the subject of a Justice Department investigation. The investigation has continued ever since. And because details of a current Justice Department investigation can't be disclosed, the effect of the official action is to have clamped a veil of secrecy around *SoF*, publisher Robert K Brown and his company, the Omega group for the last nine years.

When pressed on the question of CIA funding Brown replies: 'If we were a CIA cover, we could never admit it, could we?' □

ETHIOPIA/ERITREA

Help us to get the food through

Each day thousands more face starvation and death and yet the world is still slow to move.

Yes, our project partners in Northern Ethiopia and Eritrea desperately need your money now but, still more, they need your help in changing world opinion.

War on Want has a three point plan for saving lives:

1. **To maintain communities and reduce disease people must be fed in their villages not at the distribution points.**
2. **Britain and Europe should guarantee that the necessary grain is released to the famine areas.**
3. **An Independent International Commission should be established immediately to oversee distribution to all in need.**

Please write to your MP urging support for this plan.

Only a massive joint effort by Governments and individuals will get food through and save the dying millions.

****I enclose £50 □ £30 □ £10 □ £..... for aid in Ethiopia and Eritrea (receipt please □)**

I will write to my MP asking for support for the War on Want 3 Point Plan. Please send me more information □

Name_____

Address_____

Please send to: Rm 67, War on Want, Freepost, 467 Caledonian Road, London N7 9BR (no stamp needed)

**** Access/Visa holders may telephone in their donations on 01 609 0211 ext 10**

WAGE WAR ON WANT '84

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PUNISHING THE STARVING

In April Nicholas Claxton, with Charles Stewart, made a documentary film for Central TV about the famine in Ethiopia. It was shown on ITV on 17 July with the title 'Seeds of Despair'. Here he asks why the West did next to nothing until now, when it has had all the evidence of the gathering disaster for almost a year

WHY HAS it taken so long for governments to respond to the famine in Ethiopia?

After last year's poor harvests UN agencies and all the relief organisations stated that Ethiopia would be faced with a major food crisis in 1984. The Ethiopian government's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) announced at the beginning of 1984 that it needed 900,000 tons of grain to prevent major loss of life. The Commissioner of Relief, Major Dawit Georgis, said in March that over five million people could die if food aid was not forthcoming. He was not exaggerating. At that stage, food reserves held by the government's Agricultural Marketing Corporation were so low it was inevitable that a major crisis was well on the way.

In April I went round some Western embassies in Addis Ababa in order to find out their views of the famine and what they were recommending to their governments. The general attitude was one of concern, combined with distrust of the claims being made by the RRC on the gravity of the situation. The numbers game was being played again. Were the Ethiopian estimates correct? (I did not visit the Soviet mission, as they have only supplied Ethiopia with military hardware and rice; neither of which have any use to the famine victims. You can't eat guns and rice requires water.)

We filmed our report in the Wallo region, today described as one of the worst-affected areas. It was overwhelming even then. In the three principal government food distribution points of Korem, Kobo and Alamata thousands of people were flooding in from the countryside to get monthly food rations; at best, for a family with two children a sack of grain weighing 65 kgs, some wheatflower and butteroil. Many had walked up to a hundred miles, the distance from London to Birmingham, for that month's supply.

The food distribution centre in Korem was handling, then, in April and May over 150,000 people a month. The death toll in Korem was then around 25 a day. It has now doubled and is still rising. Children are worst affected and, because of their long-standing starvation, are dying of common illnesses such as measles, chickenpox and diarrhoea.

Others are simply wasting away, unable to resist any further humiliation. Children of two and three years are weighed-in by the Save The Children's Fund for the Emergency Feeding Programme, in many cases, at a pathetic eleven or twelve pounds. They are fighting to survive the next day.

A Western diplomat who visited the camp in Korem told me in May: 'I've never seen anything like it in all my twenty-two years in the foreign service.' Other diplomats agreed that more grain was certainly needed, but argued that government food reserves were still high. Why couldn't these be released? By then, farmers had begun to eat their own seed grain in order to survive.

When I asked one diplomat whether food aid was being diverted and sold off to feed the army, or buy weapons, as some reports have suggested, he said it was not. 'It's an inefficient and ineffective operation, but it's clean,' he said. When I asked another how the politics of Marxist Ethiopia affected his government's reaction to the crisis he replied: 'We want to shape more of a dialogue.' Another replied there was a kind of twilight zone between development aid policy and purely humanitarian relief aid.

Furthermore, was Ethiopia asking for more aid than it could handle? Transport *is* a real problem in Ethiopia. In May half of the Relief Commission's trucks were off the road for lack of spare parts and technical assistance. Roads are poor and distribution has certainly been a major problem, especially in Tigre and Eritrea in the North -- both affected by civil war. The South is also affected but not as badly.

SIX million people are now recognised as being threatened by famine. Ethiopia will need at least 600,000 tons of food aid a month for the next year — until the next main harvest, if a death toll of catastrophic proportions is to be avoided. Dr Kenneth King, resident representative of the UN Development Programme in Addis Ababa, said earlier this year that the official UN appeal for 125,000 tons was, then, an 'exercise in cynicism' and that, even though there were serious

Nicholas Claxton/Central Independent TV

A child, aged 2, weighs in at 11lbs. Can popular outrage outweigh government policies?

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distribution problems in the country, we in the West should try and overcome these obstacles. In effect, by not responding adequately to the numbers involved we would be condemning around 86 per cent of the victims to, if not death, a half-life.

In 1973, Jonathan Dimbleby made a film in Ethiopia called 'The Unknown Famine'. In that famine over 200,000 people died. Last week, eleven years later, James Ingram, the Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) said that up to 900,000 Ethiopians could die unless the country receives both massive and immediate aid. The WFP's Emergency Director, Trevor Page, has been co-ordinating relief operations to Ethiopia for the whole year of the past. He has loudly maintained throughout that, for although 24 other countries in Africa along have been designated by the UN as seriously affected by drought, Ethiopia has needed the greatest attention of the international community.

Britain's Oxfam and Save The Children Fund have been trying to put over the same message for months. Development aid is needed as well as food relief. According to Dr King of the UNDP unless aid can be given to help the people to help themselves, thousands of lives will be lost by starvation every year in Ethiopia.

The crisis cannot be overstated. Until now, charities, including Oxfam and Save The Children Fund, have been financing large-scale emergency programmes. They cannot financially continue to take on a problem that must be faced by governments.

In July 31 Mr Timothy Raison, Minister for Overseas Development, told the House of Commons that the British government would be providing more food aid and an extra £1.5 million for drought-relief in Africa. In addition, Britain would offer 2,000 tons of bilateral food aid for distribution in Ethiopia by voluntary agencies. (Britain gives some development assistance to Ethiopia through the EEC and other organisations, but none directly.)

At the end of the day Britain's contribution has been very little. The Overseas Development Administration said last month that there were serious drawbacks to the wholesale transfer as aid of the various agricultural surpluses generated in the EEC. These surpluses were 'often unfamiliar to the local diet'.

It may be, as the ODA claims, that these surpluses are expensive to ship or slow to distribute. But it is unlikely that today's Ethiopian famine victims would have objected that wheat, butter and skimmed milk powder, now in surplus in the EEC, were inappropriate to their normal diet.

The former Director of Christian Aid, Dr Charles Elliott, argues that the United States and Britain have used food aid as a weapon against Ethiopia's Marxist government. Without doubt the West has exacerbated the severity of the emergency. Discriminatory aid policies have put six million lives at risk. Our diplomats have known for a very long time about the inevitability of this crisis.

Only public outrage created by TV coverage has forced the British government to reassess its plans for emergency aid. There will have to be a long-term aid commitment, however, if similar disasters are to be prevented in the future. □

LIBYA

NO UNIONS HERE

Alan George explains why, for Gadafy, unions are undemocratic

ARTHUR SCARGILL says that NUM chief executive Roger Windsor's visit to Libya was part of his union's routine consultations with foreign trade unionists. Libya, however, has no trade unions — at least none which would merit the name in the West.

Instead, it has 'producers' congresses', which function as an integral part of Colonel Gadafy's revolutionary system. Ironically, Gadafy opposes conventional trade unions largely on the grounds that they are undemocratic — using much the same arguments as Thatcher in her attacks on the NUM.

Since the proclamation of the *jamahiriya* ('state of the masses') in 1977, Libya has officially been a classless society, with the ownership of the means of production in public hands. There is no place for trade unions because there is only the undivided people, whose individual interests are by definition broadly similar. Theoretically, Libya has also become as near perfect a democracy as possible, where the people decide their destiny through the debates of a countrywide network of local congresses, open to all the residents of the neighbourhood. Professional politicians and traditional structures of government have been abolished as obstacles to the free exercise of the popular will.

Until the late 1970s, Libya did have a traditional trade union movement, dating back to the days of the monarchy which was overthrown in 1969. It was kept under firm control by the regime, however, and in 1972 strike action was outlawed. Since the proclamation of the *jamahiriya*, the old, and by then vitiated, union structures have been dismantled.

In their place a series of 'producers' congresses' has emerged. These are akin to the local people's congresses, and group all the workers in a particular sphere of production — farmers, oil workers — who meet to debate and decide issues affecting their occupations. The producers' congresses would not be permitted to mount any challenge to the revolutionary status quo.

Gadafy's criticism of trade unions follow quite logically from his position on democracy and exploitation. Unions are inherently undemocratic, he asserts, because their members are prey to the will of the officials who control them, and these officials often act for personal or other interests, which conflict with the interests of the memberships.

His opposition to traditional trade unions parallels his rejection of traditional forms of government. 'I do not believe in any form of government, no matter how democratic it claims to be', he declared in a speech at last year's Sixth Arab Conference on Workers' Culture, 'and I consider trade unions to be a form of secondary government, ruling the workers'.

Often, he continued, trade union memberships were organised merely 'for the benefit of a union leader, for the prestige of the wider trade union movement, or in order to bring pressure on governments'.

As well as being internally undemocratic, asserts Gadafy, traditional trade unions have generally missed the point in the struggle for workers' freedom. They have emphasised improvements in wages and conditions, but in so doing have chosen to accept the wider status quo. 'All the campaigns which concentrated on wages have been far removed from providing a solution to the key problem of exploitation,' he told the conference. 'They have merely been devious reforms, closer to charity than to any recognition or respect for the true political and economic rights of workers'. No matter how high their wages, workers 'will be doomed to serfdom' so long as they accepted the validity of the employers' class.

A grand irony in the story is that Ian MacGregor has also had his links with Libya. From 1980 to 1983 he was chairman of the British Steel Corporation. During this period, BSC provided consultancy services for the steel complex being built at the Libyan coastal town of Misrata. In 1981 Libya's Heavy Industry Secretary (minister), Omar Muntasser, visited Britain to persuade UK companies to play a bigger role in Libya. Amongst the factories he toured was BSC's Newport steelworks in South Wales. There is no record of Mr MacGregor having had any objections to these ties with Tripoli. Last week, he was unavailable for comment on the matter.

Moreover, as the NUM discovered last week, the NCB was until very recently providing English language and computing courses for Libyan students. □

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□ Sussex Police Standing Order A76 devotes three pages to explain how notebooks are to be used in the force. My attention has been drawn to para. 4.2 which reads, 'Note: When entries at back meet entries from front of the book, then a new book should be taken into use. — Police Review (I. Mujer)

□ Scunthorpe is hoping to attract tourists by opening its municipal crematorium. During next month's open weekend visitors will be able to inspect ovens and other technical devices against a background of fountains, plastic decorations and piped music. — *The Times* (W. Pugh)

□ Trains were stopped again while two horses were cleared from Tilbury Town station. The official log says they were 'escorted off' the platform because they did not have tickets.' — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott).

In these dark October days of stress, strain and strikes, pontificating bishops and Leeds bus lanes, it is curiously comforting to know that the heart of Britain still beats strongly when it comes to animals. — Yorkshire Evening Post (Mrs. A. C. Marlow).

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LETTERS

More than simple pleasure

Gerry Turvey, London N2

It would be easy to reply to John Spurling's letter (*NS* 12 October) by declaring that, of course, I enjoy art but that would be to ignore an important argument because, in many ways, it is the very functioning of the 'fine art institution' which fashions our mode of enjoyment of art; for example, art books teach us ways of responding to certain artists of historical periods just as exhibition policies determine which pictures are worth offering for our delectation — which is why the fifties could be forgotten! Consequently, one reason for requiring a *broadening* of the art critical project is that this would bring to light some of the methods whereby such 'enjoyment' is socially constructed. Moreover, while I consider that the *pleasure* rendered by art works is a very important area for consideration, it seems to me a primary focus on the enjoyment of paintings is both to render a particular disservice to artists themselves by overlooking many of their concerns and to narrow unduly the attention that can be given to their productions — after all, the 'reflection of human life' in their work is *never* simple.

Furthermore, if the relationship between picture and spectator is as unproblematic as indicated, then that fact must make redundant most sorts of critical activity — even a chameleon-like one which intends to offer a fresh response to each newly presented experience. Under these circumstances it would be sufficient to name the exhibition and its location thereby allowing the spectactor to go off and be exposed to it without the preconceptions promoted by a review. In fact, though, I believe John Spurling is not as ideologically untrammelled as he claims, for the letter does betray 'commitment'; firstly, to those Romantic theories of art which give primacy to the individual creator, thereby overlooking the variety of ways in which art functions in society, and, secondly, to that complex of ideas which narrows down the role of art to something to be appreciated and upon which sensibilities may be cultivated.

The West and Cambodia

John Pilger, London SW4

Jonathan Mirsky's letter (*NS* 25 October) has much in common with William Shawcross's book about Cambodia. It relies on innuendo; it is misleading and inaccurate. Mirsky says I should have mentioned Shawcross's reference to me in the book. He is right. Unfortunately I had only so much space in which to catalogue so many inaccuracies. Shawcross wrote that 'a rather interesting quality' of my Cambodia reports was that I compared Khmer Rouge atrocities with those of Nazism and not communism. This fitted with Shawcross's theory that the analogy of Pol Pot's crimes with Hitler's was somehow all a Vietnamese propaganda plot. The rather more 'interesting quality' of such nonsense was that in the *Daily Mirror* article quoted by Shawcross I, in fact, compared the Khmer Rouge with 'Hitler's demonry' *and* 'Stalin's terror'. Small, vital truths like that are omitted throughout Shawcross's book.

Mirsky says Shawcross merely made a 'mistake' with his 1980 charge that the Vietnamese were practising genocide in Cambodia and corrected it in his book. *Where* in the book? The only reference is page 206 and there is nothing there about a 'correction'. The 'subtle genocide' theory, only slightly modified, has underpinned much of Shawcross's speculative writing about Cambodia, among the latest being a major piece published in New York last May entitled 'The Burial of Cambodia', with material drawn from his book. In this, Shawcross makes a series of charges whose authenticity has been disputed by his Cambodia travelling companion and interpreter, the Khmer scholar Ben Kiernan. In his response to Kiernan, Shawcross actually referred to 'alleged' crimes of the Khmer Rouge. 'Alleged'? Yes, of course, just like the crimes of Belsen, Dachau and the Gulag were 'alleged'!

Mirsky echoes Shawcross's claim that there was no 'mass famine' and 'mass starvation' in Cambodia. How does he know? Was he present? The aid official Shawcross quoted, who saw only 'food shortages', was not in Cambodia at the height of the emergency and suffering. Those of us who were there months earlier, at a time when there was no Western aid programme and the only substantial relief was coming from Vietnam, and who witnessed and filmed countless, starving, dying people are bemused — if that's the word — by a distinction that apparently can be made in hindsight between famine and 'mass' famine, starvation and 'mass' starvation.

In his book Shawcross dismissed a relief agency forecast that two million people would die by Christmas 1979. How easy it must be to play a numbers game years later with only your word processor as witness. If that assessment was wrong, if a million or half a million or *mere* quarter of a million had died, would that have qualified as famine, 'mass' or otherwise? I don't know, nor do I regard this kind of speculation, for transparently political reasons, worthy of much comment. What I do know is that the peoples of Indochina have endured enough at the hands of those who claim to 'love' them and who now directly and by implication seek to shift the blame for the West's continuing support for Pol Pot's genocidal murderers.

The judge's appointment

Hal Austin

It was very kind of Lord Hailsham to take time out from his obviously busy schedule to inject a bit of 'reality' into my 'fictional' story (*NS* 26 October). However, his letter fails to answer the basic questions, and only serves to further obfuscate a simple and straightforward news story.

Lord Hailsham points out that, as Lord Chancellor, he is responsible for all judicial appointments, and so was responsible for the appointment of David West-Russell as president of the Industrial Tribunals.

He was advised by his office, ie the Lord Chancellor's Department, that West-Russell was the 'best man' (sic) available. Then his letter goes on to point out that the job requires administrative

Y
X
SLUMP
LIKE LOTS OF ADOLESCENTS I USED TO THINK THERE WERE ALL KINDS OF REVOLUTIONARY ACTS THE INDIVIDUAL COULD PERFORM
BUT OVER THE YEARS I HAVE COME TO REALIZE....
THAT THE ONLY WAY I CAN ATTACK THE PATRIARCHAL BOURGEOIS MORALITY THAT I WAS BROUGHT UP WITH....
IS BY GOING TO SLEEP WITHOUT BRUSHING MY TEETH.
Self.

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as well as judicial skills.

But, may I be allowed to restate the case made by the members of tribunals as relayed through me: the presidency of industrial tribunals is not just a judicial appointment in the conventional sense. It is also a functional head of a department serviced by Department of Employment staff, working in a specialised area of law, much outside the formal restrictions of the criminal justice system.

Therefore, one would have thought that in making such a crucial appointment the Lord Chancellor would have consulted senior tribunal chairpersons along with his colleague, Tom King, at Employment. Apparently not.

Secondly, apart from stating that there is no convention giving internal candidates preference, he fails to give examples. However, up until the retirement of Sir Jack Rumbold, the job of president went to either the senior regional chairperson, or a senior chairperson. Coincidence?

Finally, he makes the point that full-time chairpersons are also frequently Crown Court recorders. But so are senior barristers. However, how many fulltime chairpersons are Crown Court judges?

I am sure that West-Russell's professional objectivity is not in doubt. But, at a time when the Department of Employment, after much prevarication, has been forced to admit that it is considering changes in the rules governing applications to industrial tribunals, then surely it is not 'fictional' to make the connection between West-Russell's appointment and the pending changes?

G K was not pro-fascist

K Edinborough, Essex

In defence of the reputation of G K Chesterton, justly remembered as one of our finest humorous, writers it is essential to correct the false attribution of his first initial to 'the first chairman of the Front' in 'The 'Greening' of the NF' (*NS* 26 October). I have a textual record from the autumn of 1934 that the official referred to was A K Chesterton, reputedly a fairly distant relative of GKC, and he acquired publicity in his role by that name for many years after. His identity is clear, although in my text he is referred to as 'Director of Policy at National Headquarters', which may or may not be equivalent to chairmanship of the Front, or the British Union of Fascists, as it was called after its foundation by Sir Oswald Mosley in 1932.

Although G K Chesterton is not generally assessed as having been politically 'progressive', Maisie Ward makes it clear in her biography, published by Sheed and Ward in 1944, that he was *not* on balance pro-fascist. He considered and presented the arguments for and against, as he saw them, but, in presenting the case against fascism in *The Man Who Was Thursday* and several articles, he gave, in Maisie Ward's words, 'a much stronger case than that normally given by its opponents'.

A dam against immigration?

A Cotton, London SW12

As someone with more than a slight knowledge of the workings of the Immigration Service I was pleased that Jolyon Jenkins (*NS* 26 October) identified many of the problems. However, he often fell short of instructive criticism and descended into gross generalisation and distortion.

The vast majority of the interviews/visits made by the UK Immigration officers result from tip-offs by the general public. This information is almost entirely provided by, and related to, nationals of Ghana, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The fact that very few Americans or Canadians are refused entry or investigated whilst in the UK is not proof that the Home Office 'cares very little about illegal white immigration', but simply of manpower being allocated wherever illegalities are found.

The overwhelming attitude of officials is not one of prejudice but one of resignation to being a small dam against what they perceive as a massive flood. This, I accept, is often an irrational belief (though shared by the majority of the population if the polls are to be believed) and it is clear that the remedy will lie in a re-definition of job objectives. Officers should be encouraged to see that their true and tangible deterrent value is to be seen at all entrance ports to be acting efficiently and without preference.

The principal reason for the type of questioning detailed in the article is that the law stands very generously weighted in favour of any illegal immigrant choosing to remain silent. 'Reason to suspect' that a house may be harbouring an illegal immigrant is not a sanction to enter, for instance, if a resident states that the person sought a) is not present b) has returned overseas c) has never lived at the address.

Unless suspects 'convict themselves' by their own actions or statements, immigration officers are powerless to act.

FEEDBACK

The joy of food

IN THE SUPPOSED relationship between food and disease modern reformers have found a cause on which to campaign on behalf of those less privileged than themselves. No longer can the plight of the working classes be attributed to drink or having too much babies; now their fondness for hamburgers, chips, sausages and white bread is their downfall, leading to premature death from heart disease, strokes and cancer. Not that this is their fault, it is just that they don't have enough money to afford 'nutritious food', and are defenceless against a food industry which wants them to eat these lethal foodstuffs.

Marion Bowman's article 'The great unfit' (*NS* 19 October) parodies the 'workers are victims' theme. As an explanation for the higher mortality from common diseases among the working class it falls at the first hurdle of scientific evidence.

The National Food Survey provides a breakdown of food intake by income group. If the 'too much fat, salt and sugar as a cause of disease' hypothesis were correct one would expect to find major differences between the groups. But there are not. The only significant discrepancy is in fresh fruit which is eaten in greater quantities by those with higher incomes.

It is time to look more critically at the origin of the idea of the pathological nature of the nation's diet. Ms Bowman cites as her source the NACNE* report drawn up by 'leading academics, health professionals, the DHSS and the British Nutrition Foundation'. Rule number one in medicine is to approach expert committee reports with some caution. The reason is simple. Medicine is an empirical art. If something works that is fine. Doctors don't need expert committees to tell them how to treat pneumonia or remove inflamed appendices. It is only when no one is really certain of what is going on that one needs expert committees to pool their collective ignorance and pontificate.

Perhaps Ms Bowman feels she is insufficiently qualified to make a reasoned judgment on NACNE's recommendations. But as she has spent the last year making a television programme promoting it, she cannot be unaware that many people think the NACNE report is as scientifically suspect as such reports can be.

Take salt, for example. According to NACNE, salt raises the blood pressure causing strokes and thus everyone should reduce their salt intake. In August, 13 doctors and scientists wrote to *The Lancet* expressing concern that on this issue 'the usual scientific standards for weighing evidence and giving advice seem to have been forgotten in an evangelical crusade to provide a simplistic view of the evidence that will prove attractive to the media'.

This is not simply a case of experts disagreeing in public. Unlike the experts on the NACNE committee the signatories to this letter have spent their professional lives investigating hypertension and they know that one of three thing can happen when people reduce their salt intake. The blood pressure either does not change, or it can fall a little but rarely enough to be of clinical significance, or it can go up.

Or consider the hypothesised relationship between fat intake and heart disease. Over the last ten years two massive experiments have assessed the impact on heart disease of recommending healthy people to reduce their fat intake. It had no effect. An important piece of evidence, one might think. The NACNE report simply ignores it.

The explanation for the lack of correlation between nutrient intake and class patterns of disease is the same as why there is a complete absence of evidence that dietary change can prevent disease — namely that hypertension, heart disease and cancer are complex diseases whose causes are not known. Experts who assert the contrary find scientific evidence so embarrassing as to be unmentionable.

Only the most fanatical are likely to implement fully the NACNE recommendations which involve reducing meat and dairy produce by about a quarter, making food unpalatable by cutting down on salt intake and markedly increasing their intake of bread and vegatables. Most will compromise by making minor tinkering changes. This might have the effect of making their bowel actions more vigorous, but on present evidence is unlikely to influence their chances of ending up in the coronary care unit.

The real effect of the recommendations is to generate an unhealthy neuroticism in people about what they eat. By pathologising the subtlety and infinite variety of the kitchen, it does for the aesthetic joys of food what the anxiety makers of the nineteenth century did for the joys of sex.

Ms Bowman suggests that the working class are proving resistant to the healthy diet message. If they are continuing to eat their black puddings, hamburgers and chips then good luck to them. But even if only a few are denying themselves the benefits of cheap nutritious foods that have been stigmatised by Ms Bowman then the propagandists have a lot to answer for.

James Le Fanu

James Le Fanu is a doctor and medical journalist.

*National Advisory Committee on Nutrition Education

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One sweet summer

Throughout his early life in an East End ladies' hat factory, Philip Marcus-Bober — son of a 'potty eccentric Jew', talented musician and compulsive gambler — sought access to the dazzling world of literature and ideas. Schooled in the then-voluntary institutes for workers' education, he went on to teach in them himself and work as a sales director in publishing. Here he describes his first step into that world of knowledge through an unforgettable week in Bangor

> My concern was always for the nobody, the man who is lost in the shuffle, the man who is so common, so ordinary, that his presence is not even noticed.
>
> Henry Miller, *Sextus*

I HAD LEFT school in the early 1920s. The education then provided in the former London County Council schools was strictly functional and severely limited to the basic essentials of the three 'R's. And it left me with a vague inner hunger that went far beyond any power of mine to express. I was, in fact, one of the 'uneducated masses' as Dr Furnival, the great Victorian scholar and Christian Socialist, pityingly termed us. But at least there was within me the first faint stirrings of an 'intellectual consciousness' which he, in his own lifetime, had so strenouously striven to bring about among the working classes.

Sadly, I was trapped from the start (in common with so many thousands of others) within a working-class life of dingy East End London factories, of long and tedious hours of labour, with its stifling of the human spirit, from which no escape seemed possible at the time. It was then that I turned to Adult Education as offering, perhaps, the only means by which I might be able to loosen the stranglehold which bound me, Prometheus-like, to my industrial 'treadmill' which was leading to mental and spiritual stagnation.

The Adult Education Movement seemed throughout the early part of my life, the only possible substitute for a university education, which was, to my untutored mind, as far distant and unobtainable as Mount Olympus! Yet, it had, nevertheless, remained within my consciousness as the most desirable and worthy of all my secret dreams. It was a dream that never left me, even in later life (well beyond my fifties), nor has it ever been properly realised. The nearest to satisfying this long latent ambition has only been at 'second-hand' (and an understanding wife) through the Workers' Educational Association, and held at various universities throughout their summer vacations. By this means, one's brief taste of university life would have to suffice, and back we would have to go to our drab lives in factories and offices, and into the general hurly-burly of the work-a-day world. But brief as this most desirable of experience was, it left me with the sweet taste of nostalgia — a perpetual ache.

WITH THE approach of our factory's July holiday fortnight, I began to study in advance the various Summer School courses advertised by WEA. One such course among the many advertised had a special appeal to me — Experiment and Symbolism in the Novel. It was based on the work of two authors: Conrad and Kafka.

It seemed to me a formidable, proper highbrow subject, on the face of it, lacking as I was in any academic experience. But I thought it was a challenging one — a right 'mind-bender' in fact, as outlined by its syllabus. It was a study course that aroused my latent literary ambitions too, for it was to become the forerunner of other annual seminars, and a step forward to my dreams of eventual self-fulfilment — if ever! I therefore put in my application some time beforehand, and was duly enrolled with the WEA for a week's course at their annual Summer School, held, on this occasion, at the University College of North Wales, Bangor. The College would be taken over for the whole of that July by the WEA in conjunction with the Extra-Mural Department of Manchester University. So, Conrad and Kafka, it was!

My work-mates in the East-End London factory where I worked, in the machine-

Philip Marcus-Bober: from hat factories to publishing

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WEA Archives

WEA Summer School in the 1950s where the women's intellect entranced Marcus Bober

made ladies-hat trade (virtually decimated since), sniffed in scornful unison when I casually mentioned, during one of our morning tea-breaks, my own holiday plans. They couldn't imagine anyone in their right minds wanting to spend a whole precious week of their holiday fortnight on 'bloody education!' They'd had enough of it in their old 'Council' schools between the wars, and they couldn't get away quick enough at the age of 14. When I unguardedly mentioned Conrad and Kafka as the subjects for my studies, they exclaimed, 'who the hell is Kafka!'. And one bright, red-headed cockney spark (the band-knife cutter) thought it was the name of a race-horse he'd backed some time ago, but, alas, with no profit to him. None of the others appeared to have read Conrad, let alone heard of him.

I suppose, in fairness to them, I must have sounded a right intellectual prig, and one could hardly blame them. We were, all of us, as H. G. Wells would have described us (in *Kipps*), caught up in the social 'drainpipe' and any attempt on anyone's part to struggle free of it through self-education and a greater literary awareness could only appear to them as rank snobbery, and an affected superiority. Perhaps they were right.

Despite some lingering doubts and self-accusations about my own shortcomings in this respect, they did nothing to mar my feelings of pleasurable anticipation as I sat comfortably back in the train journeying towards Bangor. 'Hallelujah!' I had escaped! Even though for only a fortnight from the noisy, overcrowded East End workshop; from the daily pap of conversation concerned mainly with football, horse-racing and 'crumpet', and of the endless chaffing and piss-taking that went on between us throughout each day — all in good fun, of course.

I was free too, if only briefly alas, from the daily grind of a tiring, dreary job, chalking and cutting up layers of cloth under the feverish pressures from the two partners, Issy Goldstein and Benny Ginsberg. Both were driven by some urgent compulsion for ever increasing output from us on the cutting-floor. The ladies-hat machiners, all men on piece-work, had not to be kept waiting for work — or heaven help us!

These were some of my thoughts as I endeavoured to concentrate on further revisionary study of the books of Conrad and Kafka prescribed by the syllabus before starting the course at Bangor. The long train journey northwestwards allowed me extra time for a 'refresher'. But with my first sight of the Welsh hills and the mountains beyond, all such thoughts and concerns vanished from my mind like gossamer touched by sunlight. And then, further on, from my seat in the train, came an early glimpse of the Menai Straits, silver-streaking its way through the lush banks between Caernarvon and Anglesey, on its way towards the open sea. Such vistas, as they unfolded before me during the final stages of our journey through North Wales, captivated and thrilled me beyond all measure.

And then, at last, came Bangor! My Mecca! I approached the College gates almost with a sense of reverence; I felt like genuflecting, Arab-fashion, on to the hallowed stones of the paved walk leading to the main entrance, as I made my way with a group of fellow 'pilgrims' up to Nueadd Reichel. This was the modern Residential Hall attached to the University College of North Wales, and was to be my home for the whole of the coming week.

WE WERE a cheerful, chattering concourse of men and women of all ages between 16 and 80, who gathered in the reception hall, waiting to be allocated to our bedrooms before dispersing among the various floors throughout the building. The charm of this beautiful Residential Hall was already beginning to have its effect upon us. Barriers between us were soon broken down, and the warm welcome from our genial host, the Area Organiser for the Northwest, quickly made us feel at home.

Dinner, my first meal in a college refectory, was a pleasing introduction to the competence of the kitchen staff, whose standard of cooking, and the variety of its menus during that week, never failed to satisfy me. But here under one roof were men and women seeking 'widening horizons'. The two hundred or so of us, coming from a wide cosmopolitan section of the human race, found much to learn from each other. (There was too, the colourful mingling of headgear; Indian turbans contrasting with the more severely starched blues and whites of the headresses worn by the nuns of the different

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religious orders.) All of us in that lofty, cheerful dining hall were drawn by study courses covering a wide field of subjects, from the Arts (Music, Painting, Sculpture and Literature) to the Social Sciences (Economics, Sociology, Social History and Psychology). All within a period of four weeks. You paid your money, and you took your choice.

With good food, early reserves and inhibitions swept away, and lively and stimulating conversation buzzing around and above us over the dining tables, all thoughts of Goldstein & Ginsberg and the East End workshop soon vanished like a bad dream, a million years into the past. 'This,' I said to myself, 'is what Adult Education should be about. This should be the pattern in any truly civilised society.' And indeed, this is what I imagined existed in all of our universities at the time. How I envied those fortunate students whose residential quarters we were temporarily occupying. And overlooking us all through the enormous refectory windows, as if to sharpen the envy, was the brooding presence of Mount Snowdon and its mountain range beyond as a supporting back-drop in the distance.

I had not overlooked the fact that there was work ahead of me, all to be done within the course of one week, and for which I had already carefully prepared myself. The six books were lying on my study table, waiting to be gone through again. I was already preparing my notes for the first essay, which our tutor was expecting from us, as a 'warming up' before getting down to the real business of the course. Once again, I found myself envying the student in whose room I would be sleeping and working. And *work* I was certainly looking forward to.

After we had been given time to establish ourselves and find our bearings on the campus, it was considered advisable to start our course without further delay. The first official meeting of the class took place in a lofty lecture room in the old University building — in Bangor itself. Here we were seated in comfortable armchairs, in an informal group around the tutor, a pleasant young man, a lecturer in English Literature at Manchester University. There were nine of us on the course. Eight members of the opposite sex and myself, the sole male, apart from our tutor. Indeed, it was not an unpleasant feeling to be one man among eight highly intelligent and charming women, their ages varying between 18 and 60. I was (or rather felt) the 'odd man out', a sort of maverick of the class, as our later discussions disclosed. But they were fun to be with, despite their very serious attention to the subject. These women were, for me, an education in themselves for they soon made me aware of my own intellectual limitations.

'As you know,' reminded our tutor, 'we are about to start the course on Experiment and Symbolism in the Novel, with Conrad and Kafka the two novelists with whom we shall be especially concerned'. Out came nine notebooks and Biros, all very business-like. And as the turor began to speak, we all hung on to his words with concentrated attention. I know I did! To someone as utterly unacademic as I was, and new to such literary studies in depth, the words 'Symbolism' and 'Experiment' applied to novels were strange concepts. I had never thought of novels in that way. Hitherto, I was simply a discriminating reader with a wide taste in literature, but this analytic approach to authors and their published work opened up for me new dimensions in critical interest and enjoyment.

We had a lot of ground to cover. Four major works of Conrad — *Heart of Darkness, Secret Agent, Under Western Eyes,* and *Nostromo; The Trial* and *The Castle* of Kafka. Of the two, only Conrad was familiar, while to me, Kafka was simply a name, an adjective, rather, used by literary critics sometimes when describing certain types of drama, the sinister political or the 'absurd'. Our tutor could hardly have chosen two other writers differing in so many ways. Although contemporaries (they died in 1924) each evolved his own unique form of the novel. What was beginning to emerge from our lectures and class discussions, as we pursued our subject, was an understanding of the nature of literary criticism which I began to find exciting, like an explorer of old in new territory. My discoveries were backed up by our tutor, with encouraging comments on my essays.

As we began to see it, 'Experiment' was expressed in style, and 'Symbolism' in form. We became daily aware of the contrast between the two writers. Conrad — extrovert, romantic realist, essentially masculine in his themes and treatment; discursive, lyrical. Kafka — introvert, narcissistic, tormented; terse, with an almost clinical absence of metaphor; obsessed with his own spiritual and moral shortcomings. Conrad's concern was with the concrete, material world and the place of the individual within it. Kafka's with fantasy and the inner dream-world within himself — as bewildering as *Alice in Wonderland*, or *Tristram Shandy* — without the humour! Yet, each writer sought passionately truth and integrity ('fidelity', in Conrad's own phrase), expressing in his symbolic way man's stark loneliness and insignificance against the background of the universe. Neither was a propagandist to reform the world.

WE SPENT the mornings with our tutor in lectures and discussions that hot sunny week in July, out on the broad University balcony, high overlooking the town of Bangor. No other situation could have lent itself so perfectly to our lectures and discussion on Conrad, particularly when dealing with his greatest novel, *Nostromo* — a tale of the Southern Seas under a tropical sun. Here, as we sat under the clear blue Welsh sky, within sight of the Snowdon range, could be seen the wide sweep of headland curving out to sea towards Llandudno, and which, in the heat-haze, stood out in the misty distance of Colwyn Bay like the silhouette of a monster amphibian. The heat, the blazing sunshine, the stillness, the unruffled surface of the ocean — all served as a marvellous back-drop to Conrad's dramatic opening of the novel. Parnassus, indeed.

This fragment of an autobiography would be incomplete without adequate reference to those eight women — fellow-students of mine — who contributed so much of their enthusiasm and intelligence to making this literary Seminar so memorable for me, at the North-Wales University. They all acquitted themselves with distinction — I felt the 'also-ran'. One particularly unforgettable person was a tall American nun (teaching English Literature at Caldwell College, New Jersey) whose serene and gracious presence shed an intellectual radiance among us all; there was the young woman in her early twenties, also from the USA and recently graduated, whose critical commentaries on both writers (Conrad and Kafka), especially Kafka, were so profound and equally fascinating to listen to. Enhancing, too, the cosmopolitan character of our group, was a petite Parisian woman of eighteen, as dainty as a doll and with a knowledge of English literature surprising to me in one so young and foreign to Britain.

The rest of us, Britishers, all had something to contribute in our own way, but felt, perhaps, a trifle overshadowed by so much virtuosity displayed by our overseas visitors. The elderly Jewish woman from Liverpool with a remarkable memory and equally remarkable powers of conversation; the young teacher in Further Education with an acute and questioning intelligence — 'are we not trying to be *too* clever in our search for symbolism and meaning in everything?'; the attractive ex-schoolteacher, wife of one of the professors at the seminar. Here, too, was another perceptive mind who, with the rest of our group, confounded once and for all, in my youthful view, the old masculine myth that women lack the reasoning and creative capacity of men!

And to think of my fellow-workers back in the East-End factory and their expressed contempt for 'bloody education'! □

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Baby or bathwater

Bernard Crick

The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism
ANTHONY ARBLASTER *Blackwell* £19.50

'FOR MY PART I consider it a great homage to public opinion,' remarked one of Disraeli's characters, 'to find every scoundrel nowadays professing himself a liberal.'

We socialists (of the nice kind, at least, not the hard ones) frequently get our knickers in a twist about whether to reject liberalism or to offer the best of it to everyone (Ooops! I meant to say to help to ferment those nascent processes of non-élitist democratic participation which are the condition of everyone becoming themselves at their best). The safest thing is to hedge Hegelian Left and talk about *subsuming* liberalism in a higher synthesis. Them's certainly my thoughts. Anthony Arblaster, after knocking liberalism throughout the book and showing its inherently 'bourgeois character' (like Mozart and the novel, alas), suddenly gets worried right at the end about throwing out the baby with the bathwater, and says that 'Radicals have no choice but to move beyond liberalism, while rescuing from the historical shipwreck of liberalism itself what they can of its most valuable principles and achievements.'

If only it was lying there to be plundered! That is a residual old Marxist cop-out from every difficult, mixed, problematic situation. But I'm afraid that the old ship, thinking of Reagan, Kohl and Thatcher, has plenty of wind in its sails and will drown many more people in its wake before we can persuade the crew and passengers to hand over the tiller to us — a difficult problem but more realistic than hoping for a mutiny or sitting on a high, remote rock like a siren and singing doom to the capitalist system because we are living *in the final days* foretold by the Prophet.

We are all muddled about liberalism because two questions are constantly confused. Is liberalism a coherent ideology? Do/should democratic socialists share some of its values? Now the second question is only torture, as it plainly is for Anthony Arblaster, if our answer to the first is a very strong 'Yes', for it then seems to follow that we cannot pick and choose. Some socialists, of course, solve the question by definition: Marxism as a series of logical axioms. But the answer must be historical, and the wholly good thing about Anthony Arblaster's book is that he addresses himself to the difficult historical question with an ambition and on a scale not seen since Guido de Ruggiero's *The History of European Liberalism* (1927) and Harold Laski's somewhat derivative but more critical *The Rise of European Liberalism* (1936) — if one excludes an incredibly well and widely chosen anthology, *Western Liberalism*, edited by the late E.K. Bramsted and K.J. Melhuish.

So, 200 pages of this book are an historical commentary on the rise of liberalism and 100 on its alleged decline. But before that there are 80 most interesting pages on liberal ideas of the individual and on liberal values. 'Individualism' (he holds that word in tongs) becomes the claim of the more able, or simply the richer, to rule over the rest; but the rest are still, or should be, truly individuals. There's a nice dash of anarchism (I'm sure he would scorn anything as soft and soapy as 'democratic socialism') that mitigates Arblaster's Marxism and makes him loath to say that individuals are simply class members, or that Party-cruel Aunty knows best. Liberals, indeed, under-estimate human sociability, present, past and potential; but socialism is not the only answer: civic republicanism, from its mentor Aristotle through to Tocqueville, said that man was a social animal, and Burkean conservatives (not the liberal sort) have seen this too. Red Kens and Old Tories have in common at least a sense for community and a distrust of too much rationality and individuality. Arblaster's historical account reveals these overlappings, but he constantly and, to me at least, irritatingly argues with his own sources if they don't conform to his model of a coherent liberal ideology and his residual Marxist belief that ideologies don't overlap and interpenetrate. Everyone is double-damned: damned for being liberal and damned for not being liberal enough.

Similarly with his account of 'Liberal Values'. They are freedom, tolerance, privacy, constitutionalism and the rule of law, liberal democracy, reason, science and progress, and capitalism itself — capitalism not simply as a cause of liberalism but as values to be sustained (i.e. competition, self-help, etc.). So the socialist should add equality and fraternity. Indeed. But does that supercede or subsume the other values? In his previous book *Academic Freedom* (1974), Arblaster seemed to believe that bourgeois liberty and socialist liberty were totally different things. But now, like Ralph Miliband, he seems (wisely) less sure. Yet he carps at all the great past liberals for not also being democratic, an oddly liberal thing to do, losing in acid hindsight the historical relativism of Marxism.

Some readers will enjoy his punching the dead and exposing, as it were, the hairy backside of the smooth liberal legend — especially if they've read one of those impeccably liberal histories of political thought that pretend to objectivity. But some would wish that he had let the glorious dead speak for themselves, had exercised his undoubted gift for empathy more than his talent for anger. Let them hang themselves, the reader does not need to be nudged every paragraph.

I think that it is more important to reject liberal theory than liberal values. The Liberal holds that the rise and fall of societies is explained not by the experience and ability of traditional élites (conservatism) nor by the social relationships of the primary producers of wealth, the skilled industrial worker or the peasant small-holder (socialism), but by the initiative and invention of individuals competing in a natural market. Liberals wrote lives of good statesmen and great inventors for school prizes. When I get to the school prize-giving stage I'll give away any unsold Arblasters — though I obviously don't wholly approve of it, well-written, lively and stimulating though it is. □

Andrzej Krauze

Parisian whispers

David Caute

Saint-Germain-des-Prés: French Post-War Culture from Sartre to Bardot
PAUL WEBSTER & NICHOLAS POWELL
Constable £9.95

DID YOU know that Nathalie Sarraute gave refuge to Samuel Beckett when he was on the run from the Germans in 1942? That she emptied her best room for him, furthermore, yet he later disparaged it as an attic and she responded by belittling his work — even though the two writers are conspicuous modernists,

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divorcing words and things, exploring devious patterns of consciousness? 'He's always snivelling and I don't like his lack of decency,' Sarraute is reported as saying of Joyce's disciple. Did you know that if Françoise Sagan had turned up for a scheduled meeting with the film director Alain Resnais, then she rather than Marguerite Duras might have written the film script which later became *Hiroshima mon Amour?* Did you know that when Sartre died in the Broussais Hospital, Simone de Beauvoir 'lay down beside his cold body and slept with him for some hours until a nurse came to cover Sartre with a sheet'? De Beauvoir's own account is a bit different (as translated by Patrick O'Brian): 'I lay on top of the sheet and I slept a little. At five the male nurses came.' The discrepancy is not important; books such as this one trade mainly in gossip, a commodity which, like Brie, is best when over-ripe.

From Sartre to Bardot? The idea seems to be that Sartre's existentialism led, via the Café de Flore and Les Deux Magots, to Sagan's *Bonjour Tristesse* and Bardot's *belle poitrine*. Saint-Germain-des-Prés measures, roughly, one square kilometre; distinguished as were its denizens, it can no more serve as a paradigm for French 'culture' than Hampstead, Chelsea or Bloomsbury could for British culture. Bardot's family, in any case, were *haute bourgeoisie* living in the smart 16th arrondissement. Credulity becomes over-stretched when one is told that Bardot's film *Et Dieu créa la Femme* offered a 'romantic, liberated view of Saint-Tropez, Saint-Germain-des-Prés's summer playground'. Ah.

Much of the narrative is crammed, pot-boiling stuff which is neither accurate nor credible. The Theatre of the Absurd, we are told, had 'four Left Bank evangelists, Arthur Adamov, Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet and Eugene Ionesco'. But we are also told that the four playwrights really had little in common; 'it was a disservice by contemporary critics to lump them all together under a convenient title' — then why perpetuate the malpractice? And who could describe Beckett as an 'evangelist' of anything?

The political sections of this book are riddled with errors and misconceptions. Did Sartre really put *Les Temps Modernes* 'at the service of Communist orthodoxy' and did he really 'censor his own works to obtain Aragon's imprimatur'? News to me. It's also news that Sartre made his commitment to the CP visible when 'the Party's power was shattered by the 1952 general elections. . .' There was no general election in 1952. Elsewhere the authors refer to an election in 1951 and claim that the CP's strength in the National Assembly fell from 183 to 11 deputies. 'Shattering' indeed: in fact the Communists won 101 seats in 1951. And when the authors refer to Sartre's essay *'Réflexions sur l'antisémitisme'*, I assume they mean his *'Réflexions sur la Question Juive'*. When they describe the Congress for Cultural Freedom as an 'anti-racist organisation' one's confidence is not strengthened; similarly to refer to Andrei Zhdanov and his notorious doctrine for the arts as 'Jdanov' and 'Jdanovism' is simply ignorant — if one insists on using the French spelling of a Russian name in an English text, then it should be '-isme' not '-ism'. A Communist painter who is said to have obeyed 'the dictates of Jdanovism' was a certain 'André Forgeron' — possibly a reference to Fougeron. The passages on the Cold War are characterised by the crudest misconceptions, as when we are informed that for Sartre 'the Soviet Union appeared as a sort of paradise, justly achieved through rightful purges'.

Twenty years and more of French 'culture' cannot be packaged in 250 pages if the notion of culture is extended from politics, literature, drama and cinema to acting, cabaret and painting. One reference to Jeanne Moreau, one to Fernandel, one to Jacques Tati, none to Simenon, none to Michel Foucault, Lucien Goldmann, Louis Althusser and Claude Lévi-Strauss; none to Fernand Léger. Juliette Gréco appears on more than 30 pages, Giacometti on only one. Where is Danielle Darrieux, where Arletty, where Edwige Feuillère? Jean Anouilh is mentioned once, Roger Planchon not at all. Maybe the mysterious principle of inclusion and exclusion hinges on Saint-Germain-des-Prés: who lived there, drank there, made love there; or was associated with someone who did; or was admired by people who did. Yet Brecht and Brando, though included, were surely not more frequently seen in the Rue de Rennes and the Rue Bonaparte than the unmentioned leaders of the student movement of 1968 — a phenomenon disposed of in half a page. □

Stephen Knight

The top floor

Our bottled foetus
Has flowering limbs, I
Close the cupboard door
On it. In his room
Mister Robins is
Folding down the thumbed
Corner of a page
Of Milton, loving
The solid brickwork
Of the verse. I reach
The top floor panting;
A panatella
Turns to dust between
His ochrous fingers.
In the yard, pupils
Congregate like spawn:
A group of First Years
Debate the size of
Barbra Streisand's
Breasts. I lay flat on
The sill and bellow
To my friend four floors
Below. Looking up,
He cups his hands to
His ears. Angelic
And bald, our bottled
Foetus wallows in
Stasis as vowels
And consonants fall
Like sediment.

Tainted supply

Francis Wheen

Lies, Damned Lies and Some Exclusives
HENRY PORTER *Chatto* £9.95
Public Scandal, Odium and Contempt
DAVID HOOPER *Secker* £12.95

'FLEET STREET has never been worse' is one of those statements like 'Summers aren't as hot as they used to be' which has been uttered every year for as long as anyone can remember. Nevertheless, it is now true, as Henry Porter's survey of the national press's behaviour since the start of 1983 demonstrates. Almost all of Porter's examples were well known to me, but they acquire a shocking cumulative force when brought together in this way. The period under review is, after all, one which included the Press Council's report on the Yorkshire Ripper, the Hitler Diaries, the hounding of Peter Tatchell, the general election (remember the *Daily Mail*'s fictitious story that Nissan would pull out of Britain, at a cost of 35,000 jobs, if Labour won?), the Chesterfield by-election (when the *Sun* ran its famous 'Benn on the couch' feature), the *Guardian*'s betrayal of Sarah Tisdall, the appointment of Andrew Neil as editor of the *Sunday Times* and Robert Maxwell's purchase of the Mirror Group.

Porter proves that the individual cases he cites — the *Sunday Times*'s dishonest and manipulative coverage of the Parkinson affair, for instance, or the *Sun*'s invented interview with Marcia McKay — are not mere accidents or isolated lapses. They are symptoms of Fleet Street's systematic failings. Most newspapers are now so accustomed to lying, toadying to those in power and traducing ordinary people that they are incapable of behaving otherwise. What is particularly alarming is not the disgraceful conduct of papers such as the *Sun* or *Mail* (one expects nothing else from them) but the fact that the *Sunday Times* and even the *Guardian* have allowed their journalistic standards to slip.

One quibble. Porter claims that in the press today 'often even the most basic information, such as ages and the spelling of names, is wrong'. Yet he himself manages to mis-spell the names of Matthew Parris, Denis Thatcher, Denis Healey, John Davis, Phillip Knightley, John Whale and Christopher Hird.

David Hooper's book suffers from the same disease; its most extraordinary creation is 'Frank Chappell', the former leader of the electricians' union. Aside from that, Hooper's book is an entertaining study of recent libel cases. He hesitates to draw conclusions, but he doesn't need to: the evidence he provides will convince any half-way sane reader that the libel laws are an absurd lottery. It is a disturbing fact that the two methods of redress which are supposed to be available to people who are unfairly treated by the press are both utterly worthless: the Press Council is a spavined old pooch that should have been put down ages ago; and the libel laws can be used only by those who least need their protection — the rich and

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powerful. This is why Fleet Street can continue to print lies about the Greenham women or fabricate interviews with war widows; and it is one reason why, as Henry Porter writes, 'Fleet Street arrived at the end of 1983 never having served its public quite so badly'. □

Running faster

Oliver Harris

Quest for Kerouac
CHRIS CHALLIS *Faber* £3.95

JACK KEROUAC, King of the Beats and of a generation not lost but searching for its identity; the drive to self-discovery and the dynamic of a culture as one journey: Chris Challis follows the trail, the stations of the Beat cross, with great originality and style. The journey by gas-guzzler across America reads rather like Hugo Williams's *No Particular Place to Go*, with, as its own maxim, 'The obsession's in the chasing not the apprehending'. True to itself the book does not find Kerouac, but offers elliptical, eloquent glimpses of the road he once travelled. Accessible to the novice-reader, yet arcane enough for the adept, it moves allusively through a literary landscape, providing an anthology and a portrait-gallery of Beatdom.

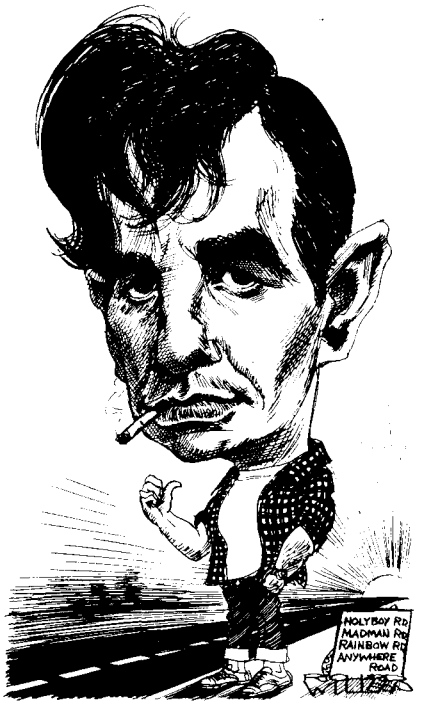
Hybrid books require perfect balance and Challis has uneasy moments. His presence, though vivifying and engaging, can be distracting when it becomes self-indulgent or over-ingenious. He earns the right to be on-stage — personal input is the key to his book as it was the spring of the Beat Generation — but he risks upstaging Kerouac himself.

The Beats were Spenglerian dancing angels of the holocaust, rebelling against the psychic and moral rigidity of the Fifties, thawing out the cold war. It was a movement with a myth rather than a manifesto, held together by shared experiences rather than literary tendencies. They were rebels with good cause, branded as juvenile delinquents and dope fiends because they despised good taste and decorum. The liberation of the self from Puritan suspicion and shame released a flood of cathartic confessions, dreams from a season in hell; *Howl*.

There's a moody economy to Challis's anecdotes as he revisits the territory. In New York he discovers Herbert Huncke, the archetypical junky hustler. In Boulder, Colorado, there's the 'Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics' run by Allen Ginsberg. In San Francisco, the artist-publisher Ferlinghetti set up City Lights to put poetry back into pockets. McClure, Snyder and Corso, each sounding a little jaded on North Beach. The party's over. . .

A place is found for John Clellon Holmes, whose novel *The Horn* so astutely made the jazz musician the quintessential American artist and whose composite characters conflate two traditions: Charlie Parker and Herman Melville, Mark Twain and Dizzy Gillespie, outlaw individuals against the American grain and therefore truly American.

And so on, inevitably, to Ginsberg and Burroughs who form, with Kerouac, a Beat Holy Trinity: the messianic heir to Whitman and the gun-toting prophet of doom are both given lively, incisive analysis. Literary socialists, the Beat writers chronicled their own generation and fictionalised each others' lives into legends. It was self-exposure that united them as they lived and unveiled the madness. Yet the close identification of man and myth is least apt for the man whose very name is synonymous with the Beat style.

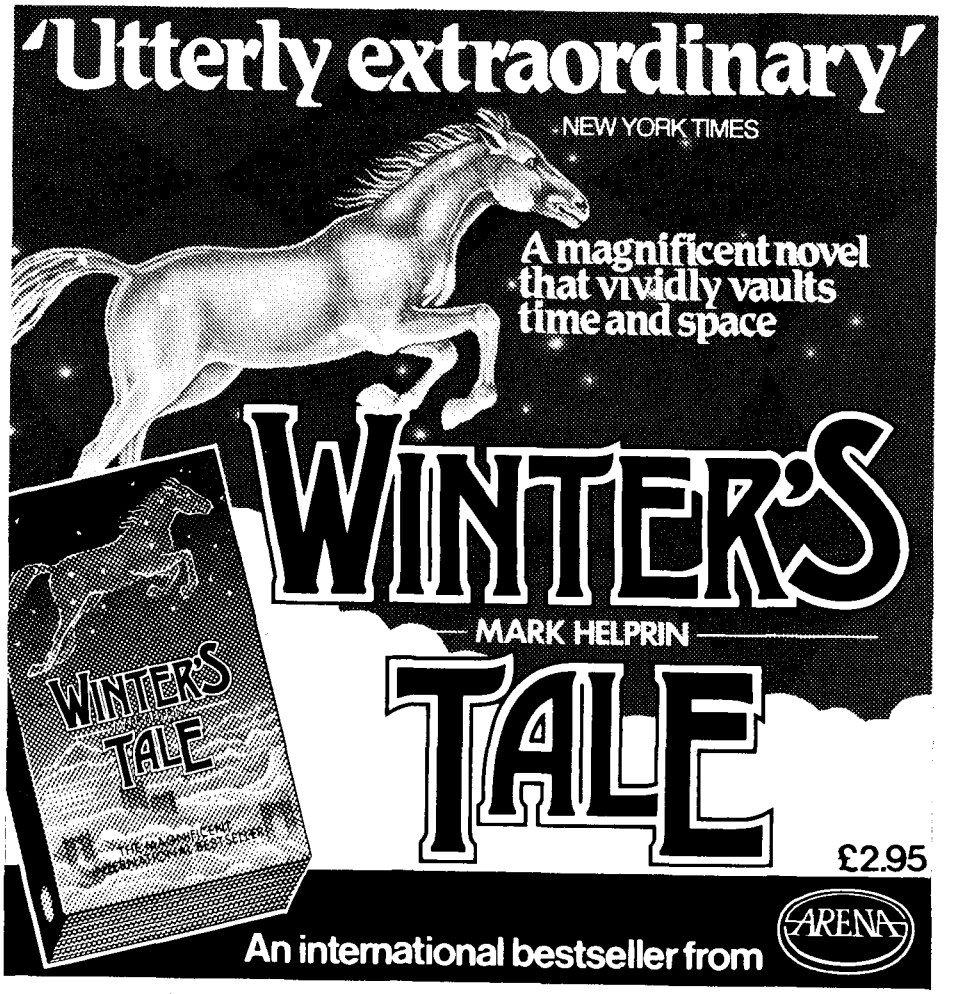


Richard Willson

Kerouac's exuberant persona as the improvisatory saxophonist of spontaneous prose and the insatiable pioneer of the highways crisscrossing America was a mask for his yearning shyness. He was a lonesome traveller. He never cut the umbilical cord to his mother and, as Challis also notes, was defenceless against the critics' easy scorn.

On the road, to tire is to die. Kerouac's questing metabolism was fulfilling the impossible promise of *Great Gatsby*'s earlier Jazz Age — 'tomorrow we will run faster'. The fastest of them all was Neal Cassady, Kerouac's alter ego, a comet of hedonistic kinetic energy, the amphetamine Ahab at the wheel. Together Neal and Jack 'were a Beat Hope and Crosby in a real-life road movie', with Carolyn Cassady, the woman they shared, as Dorothy Lamour. (Women take, at best, supporting roles.) Later, under Snyder's zen influence, Kerouac gave up hitch-hiking for meditation, nomadic rapture finally turning in on itself, before it turned to the bottle.

In America, vision and velocity are one; from *Moby Dick* to *The Great Shark Hunt* the culture leaves wrecks in its wake as it pursues a green light for ever ahead. At the end of Challis's quest he is left holding the ashes of Neal Cassady: something solid, a kind of full stop on an endless journey. A spiritual quest re-told as a ghost story, this book's greatest success is simply to make you go back to the original texts, to follow the road for yourself. □



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FICTION

Ring of words

Roger Lewis

The Winner of the Fooker Prize
GUY KENNAWAY *Quartet* £7.95
Blue Pastoral
GILBERT SORRENTINO *Marion Boyars* £9.95
Eclogues: Eight Stories
GUY DAVENPORT *Picador* £2.95
The Lion of Pescara
GEORGE MACBETH *Cape* £8.95
Watson's Apology
BERYL BAINBRIDGE *Duckworth* £8.95

USUALLY, a novel like **The Fooker Prize** I'd put in the dustbin. I loathe the strenuously madcap, the anxiously silly. This week it is picked out for its apt title alone; the Booker McConnell federation should consider adopting it until they sort themselves out. Beyond its title, however, Guy Kennaway's squib is of little distinction. The novel deals with that huge company of narrators who want to barge into the text, chattering about the book being made as we proceed. Joe Savage has written eight novels in 20 months. The octet moulders unpublished. The paper-chase of rejection slips evidently failed to hammer home a message about the ninth.

Blue Pastoral, contrariwise, is bedazzling. Richard Cobb, who hasn't read Joyce or Proust, wouldn't get further than the first page — not because Joyce and Proust are needed for ingress but because Gilbert Sorrentino expects his audience to do some work and think about the world of language in which he immerses it. There is, it is true, a mention of Martha Clifford, Bloom's epistolary paramour ('a tittied, beamish, princess free') and a sighting is made of the man with lemony soap himself — but such references enrich rather than obtrude.

Sorrentino's work is a modern *Candide*, a transplantation of Voltaire to the Americas. Dr Dubuque introduces us to Serge Gavotte, aka Blue, our hero and an experimental pianist. A zany picaresque ensues. The travel, though, is more through literary styles than across geographical landscapes. Syntax is bouncy and bubbly; the mood is prandial, as if coming from a bibulous banquet; form transmogrifies into playlets, songs, lessons, poems, cabarets. We are given musical interludes and — for the prim — a sex-scene is self-censored with asterixes.

Blue Pastoral is anything but slumbrous, lazy pastoral: it is irrepressible, its language — and what else is literature but language? — dips and dances. Read it. It contains, within its prodigal embrace, incidentally, the best new-minted dialects since *A Clockwork Orange:* 'Away, you snowbell scurd! Clear fast!'

GUY DAVENPORT I knew previously only from an essay on Ezra Pound. **Eclogues** proves he is as good an author as he is a critic. The book is a sequence of short stories, themselves further subdivided into exquisite sections. Sorrentino's pastoral is a lexical bacchanal; Davenport's is measured and refined. He is fond of reference to fine-art. 'The Death of Picasso', for example, is about an art critic living an island idyll; the Thames, in 'Christ Preaches at the Henley Regatta', 'gleams as if Canaletto, Dufy, and Cézanne had got at it'. *Ecologues* is a meditative book. It attempts to turn languages into images: we *see* Davenport's words, they are iconic; we *hear* Sorrentino's, they are acoustic.

Davenport's juggling of the hours, the way he makes the Classics merge with the modern world, evokes Pound's *Cantos* — where 'all ages are contemporaneous' and history is the biggest fiction of all. Historical personages, in *Eclogues* (as in Pound), are liable to appear in whatever period they please: death has no dominion over them.

The Lion of Pescara, a memoir of Gabriele D'Annunzio, is about a historical personage over whom neither death, nor many things else, had dominion. George MacBeth has fun telling the story of a man who seemed the creation of a baroque brain. A gossip columnist, a duellist, a librettist, a soldier, a hero, a self-publicist, an inveterate shagger: D'Annunzio was a Rennaisance princeling who lived between 1863 and 1938. He was a living anachronism — and Pound liked him for his 'laconism, no frills and pantalettes'.

In a novel, MacBeth's fascination apart, he is redundant: D'Annunzio was already a fiction; his life, like Dali's, a work of art. **Watson's Apology** discloses Beryl Bainbridge giving more life to characters in her book of documentary-fiction than they doubtless had when actually alive. A recreation of a clergyman's murder, this is wax-museum stuff. The author has a zippy, gothic imagination, and she is better served by this material than by the puddingy Priestley. □

PAPERBACKS

Going public

Alan Brien

INSIDE ANY cell of any group of any generation, you will usually discover one member, admired, respected, even feared by the others, who lived and died unremarked by the world outside.

He — and I use that pronoun because the role, though in some ways traditionally feminine, seems always fulfilled by males — may have lacked an instinct for competition. Or he may have found his appetite for applause, influence and celebrity amply sated among his close, select audience. Unless the rest of the group consisted of public figures, his name will have faded with the last anecdote of the last public-house raconteur.

But if he were born and educated among the famous and powerful, then the chances are his spirit could resurface for a glittering after-life when their memoirs, biographies and correspondence begin to be published. There may even survive a nonagenarian PM or Nobel laureate to testify that the Unknown Headboy was the most original of them all.

In recent years, Brian Howard was a notable example. Now Oxford bring us **Geoffrey Madan's Notebooks** (£2.95), edited by former All Souls' Warden John Sparrow and former British Museum Keeper of Prints J. A. Geere, with a Foreword by Madan's Eton and Oxford contemporary, Harold Macmillan.

Madan came up to Balliol in 1913 loaded with prizes, left to have a 'good war', returned and left again without a degree, served a brief stint in the City, then, encouraged by a small private income and a mild private disability, spent the rest of his life as an amateur don, historian, clubman and wit.

A fair amount of what is printed here — original aphorisms, over-heard remarks, odd incidents, unusual lists and rules, potted reminiscences, gossipy curiosities — has a parochial tang, distinctive and pungent, if too steeped for most of us in a world of Eton masters and Oxbridge eccentrics, civil service grandees and country-house politicoes.

But there remains page after page of provocative information — 'words without rhymes: silver, moth, depth, false' or 17 entries in the *Dictionary of National Biography* of 'unusual interest and not usually read' — interspersed with vivid insults — 'Mrs Simpson: half governess, half earwig' — or unexpected observations — 'Wall of China, only work of man visible from the moon'. Unfamiliar jokes, jests, aphorisms and epigrams abound from which I select only one with a topical relevance — Two anarchists talking: 'What time is it by your bomb?'

Another minority curiosity which may reach a wider public in paperback is **The Stuffed Owl** (Everyman, £2.95), an anthology of bad verse. D. B. Wyndham Lewis, the major compiler, was the outstanding humorous columnist of my youth under the name 'Timothy Shy', much superior to his more famous and cruder rival 'Beachcomber'. A reissue of his pieces is well overdue.

His examples of rotten poetry are only appreciated to the full by those who can recognise the best poetry, so the fears expressed by some reviewers that great art is being humiliated must be groundless. If Wordsworth cannot survive his appalling neighbours, then he deserves them. Lewis's ironic impudence is today no longer so startling but I still enjoy that introductory note on Wordsworth's French love affair I so relished as a schoolboy — 'an idyll characterised by true Wordsworthian rectitude, elevation and propriety. Annette's child was a girl.'

H. F. Ellis's **A Bee in the Kitchen** (Methuen, £3.50) shares some of Geoffrey Madan's pre-occupations: only another obsessive pedant would search through Shelley's complete works to check a *Times* small ad. offering paving stones associated with the poet. A professional humorist for half a century, he offers here what is apparently his first collection. I looked forward to them since Ellis is regarded as the touchstone of elegant wit among many writers I admire.

I'm sorry to say they seem tiresomely and repetitively mannered, and dependent largely on one device. He takes a mass of scholarly footnotes about, say, wine in classical times and works it into a supposedly everyday tableau. One major drawback is that most people he

Contd. on p.34

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Shorter reviews

Only the Rivers Run Free: Northern Ireland: the Women's War
EILEEN FAIRWEATHER, ROISIN McDONOUGH and MELANIE McFADYEAN *Pluto* £5.95

There are stories in this book to bring tears to the eyes — tales of suffering, bewilderment or anger spoken into the tape-recorder by women, mainly from the Catholic ghettoes, in Northern Ireland.

Mothers, wives — and widows — of H-block prisoners give harrowing accounts of their experiences and there are horrifying first-hand descriptions of prison visits. Republican paramilitaries explain their involvement in campaigns and their worries about their status as women within military commands. Feminists and social workers try to unravel the tangled political, social and sexual paradoxes in which most of the women are enmeshed.

Some of the incidents described, like Rose's recollection of her terror of the B Specials, in the late 1960s, as they came along the street beating their shields with their batons, herald the police tactics being used during the present miners' strike.

More revealing, in some ways, than the self-aware testaments of the activists, are the confused and frightened outpourings of women whose sexual and political ignorance has left them without questions to ask — of Nora, for instance, who, dreadfully ill after more than 20 pregnancies, including several miscarriages and stillbirths, was urged by a compassionate priest to seek contraceptive help but denied it by a bigoted medico.

That there is one law — and one style of media-reporting — for the Unionist and one for the Republicans is beyond doubt. Unfortunately, the book itself allows a bit of a double standard to creep into its final section, about Protestant women, thereby calling into question its overall attitude to violence — not to its roots, but to its consequences.

The main body of the book, however, gives a unique insight into life within the Catholic communities and into the women's mounting bitterness against the 'Brits' and their escalating support for the 'Provos'. It is a tribute to the courage, skill and sensitivity of the three authors that they were able, sometimes at considerable risk to their own safety, to gather such vivid, urgent — and often very private — material and to assemble it into such a powerful 'troops-out' polemic.

Nina Hibbin

The Letters of Vita Sackville-West to Virginia Woolf
ed. LOUISE DeSALVO and MITCHELL A. LEASKA *Hutchinson* £12.95

Both these women's lives are now much told tales. Many of the 500-odd letters they exchanged are also familiar: Woolf's in their entirety, Vita's substantially from Victoria Glendinning's 1983 biography. But once their correspondence is extricated from the mass of lives and letters which usually press upon it, new perspectives emerge. 'The longest and most charming love-letter in literature' said Nigel Nicolson of *Orlando,* Woolf's 1928 novel inspired by and dedicated to Vita. But Literature, as we all know, often dares to say what Life prefers to keep quiet. The insistently lesbian nature and significance of the 18-year relationship between *Orlando*'s creator and inspiration is, in their correspondence, camouflaged, neutralised and made safe in endlessly ingenious ways. (For Vita, at least, it clearly needed to be: she, who caused such scandal by eloping with Violet Trefusis, in these letters uses 'lesbian' only of women she despises or fears. However 'promiscuous' her sexual practice, her attitude to her own sexuality remained deeply equivocal. And Woolf, often so direct in her letters, gave no hint in her diaries of the relationship's most momentous crises.)

Ostensibly this is a book without husbands: Leonard and Harold, usually so central, retreat to the wings. In fact their ubiquitous off-stage presence makes safe the erotic undercurrent running throughout this collection. As does the comforting use of 'acceptable' words such as 'child' and 'maternal'. The 'child-like' Virginia can, when ill, crave Vita's concern, physical soothing and impassioned nursing (all good 'female' qualities) without in any way calling into question Leonard's adequacy or her own need for Vita. Their use of animal pet names — 'Potto' for Virginia, 'porpoise', 'Dearest creature' for Vita — helps to desexualise physical references, to create a verbal world in which nursery whimsy offers cover for more dangerous emotions: 'Potto kisses you and says he could rub your back and cure it by licking.'

But in the end women — and writers — as intelligent as these cannot fail to recognise the inner significance of their own verbal games. Witness Virginia's warning to a womanising Vita: 'You only be a careful dolphin in your gambolling, or you'll find Virginia's soft crevices lined with hooks.' Quite.

Alison Hennegan

Modern Times
PETER YORK *Heinemann* £7.95

Peter York's new book is like a glossy magazine with hard covers. It has its features on Political Style, Design, Victorian Values and the Brideshead revival; its profiles of Julie Burchill, Mark McCormack and Bryan Ferry; and its miscellania on platform boots, Fairisle knitwear and when not to shave.

The underlying theme is style, the perfect indicator not only of who we are but also of who we want to be. Or wanted to be — since some of the best pieces are on the rise and fall of Sixties Executive Style ('Any colour as long as it was grey') and the hegemonic world of graphic design that found a home in Covent Garden, a retail outlet in Habitat and a haircut in Graphic Frank who 'had the Ruthless Roman, the early sixties Italian Look jazz modern crop when his hair went, so now that's graphic too, cross-hatched on his scalp in very low relief'. The Ruthless Roman was actually pioneered by Mick McManus the wrestler but York's reputation as grand young man of style, coiner of the phrase that sticks — reactionary chic, video bohemians — is, overall, deserved. This means an eye, on the one hand, for stereotypes, on the other for vivid depiction of individual looks: Michael Foot as 'radical clergyman', Harold Wilson as 'the friendly bank manager in the cupboard'.

Appropriately enough, York's disparate material is held together by *his* style. A style implies a stance and York's sweeping notation is the perfect counterpart for what he is writing about. Learning is often best worn lightly in these matters; many commentators make the mistake (signifier this, Saussure that) of clomping around in theirs. York's writing is sharp enough to cut through objections and witty enough to make interruption seem oafish. When, for example, he writes that 'at the end of the seventies, as times got harder, kids wanted to look sharper, richer, less depressed' you feel almost niggardly when you add that it depends which kids you're talking about. Not, certainly, the full-bondage punks and mohicans.

Geoff Dyer

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meets fail to convince. Who can credit one working-man insulting another in a pub by shouting 'Go and find Nanny'?

THERE IS a distinct difference, easy to spot, hard to describe, between the criterion used for prose that is a true report and that which admits itself to be fiction.

Normally, I prefer the first, if only because it is much harder to do. As autobiography, it is difficult to fault Edward Blishen's **Sorry, Dad** (Allison & Busby, £2.95), totally convincing yet painfully funny and alive. Yet it is also impossible to resist the novelised tale of an individual life, Henry Pratt from 13 March 1935 to 3 September 1953, told by his *alter ego*, David Nobbs, in **Second from the Last in the Sack Race** (Methuen, £1.95). This book sails clearly, sometimes embarrassingly, close to the coast of reality, while retaining all the excitement of farce.

One of the rewards of paperback browsing is coming across foreign writers whose names are vaguely but tantalisingly familiar at a price you can afford to risk. Angel Classics have launched such a series beginning with Nikolay Leskov's **Five Tales** and Ivan Bunin's **Long Ago** (both £4.95 in paperback, £8.95 in hardback).

Leskov was a contemporary of Tolstoy, a popular success but a critical flop in his own country, and hardly known in the West. He turns out to be a compulsive, button-holing story-teller, moving the narrative along at a brisk canter, never overdoing the peculiar and bizarre types he encounters and keeping an undertone of irony just below the surface.

Bunin is a 20th-century writer of more highly sophisticated and self-conscious prose — he won the Nobel Prize in exile in 1933 — seeming to incline to the painter or the poet rather than the reporter. The stories are heavy with half-suppressed nostalgia, memories that return, images that will not be erased, particularly the splendours and miseries of sexual infatuation. They are reminiscent of a Nabokov with a heart.

But the most enjoyable, surprising and unusual discovery was an author I thought I had explored as much as I could endure — Bertolt Brecht. Whether you cannot stand him, or you adore him, his **Collected Short Stories** (Methuen, £3.95) are a treat. This is a Brecht we have rarely glimpsed before, the writer of 'entertainments' in the Greeneian sense that make us think of Dashiell Hammett or the early Hemingway. I give the opening of one written in the late 'Twenties —

> They sat on cane chairs in Havana and let the world go by. When it got too hot they drank ice water; in the evening they danced the Boston at the Atlantic Hotel. All four of them had money.

Who could resist reading on? □

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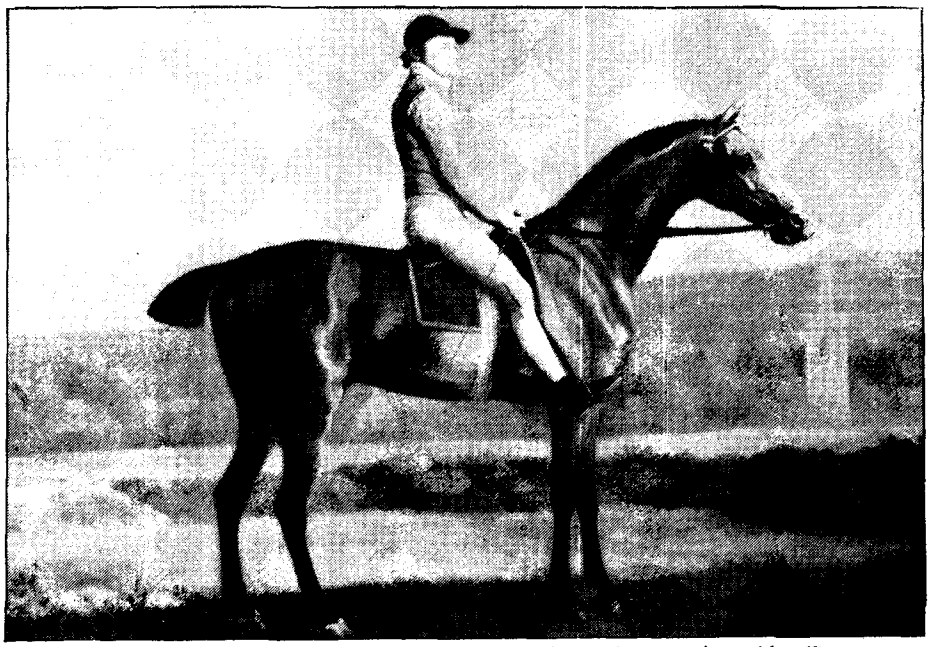
Voyage to the Houyhnhnms

John Spurling



***Otto, with John Larkin Up:* by a man who was more than a horse-painter (detail)**

George Stubbs 1724-1806
Tate

THERE HAVE been various partial views of Stubbs's work since Bryan Robertson's comprehensive 1957 exhibition at the Whitechapel first drew serious attention to him. The present exhibition — selected and catalogued by Judy Egerton with a detailed knowledge, a sense of humour and an eye for the whole effect worthy of her subject — is the largest ever mounted and its main aim is to dispose for ever of 'Mr Stubbs, the Horse-Painter' and to offer us instead a great English master, whose rigorous objectivity and avoidance of over-statement have contributed to his being undervalued for two centuries.

Stubbs was indeed a horse-painter and an observer of animals in general — witness his zebra, his rhinoceros, his bull-mooses, his dogs, his deer, his lions and cheetah — of peculiar accuracy and vivacity, but was equally good at the two-legged variety. Not that he was simply a portraitist, though his paintings of both animals and humans are portraits (no two of his horses, nor even his two bull-mooses, are the same), but something much rarer. His settings are sometimes a bit vague and characterless, photographers' studio backcloths, as it were, to the figures (animal and human) strung out, usually in profile, across the foreground. If the picture-frame almost begins to resemble a proscenium and what it contains a scene on a stage, that is the first clue to what Stubbs is giving us.

Yet his most obviously dramatic paintings — the famous series of lions leaping on horses — emerge from this exhibition as his least satisfactory or at any rate most trivial works. Stubbs was not a dramatist of the extraordinary, but of the ordinary, though the ordinary in his hands became so particularised as to be extraordinary. He was — though no one could have recognised it at the time and it has taken this long for us to do so — a painter of contemporary history, that part of it lived by the rural gentry, the hunting, shooting and racing fraternity with their servants, their mounts and their dogs. His paintings, as his patrons required, record the minutiae — this aristocratic or workaday face, this mare or stallion, this bitch or hound, this house, carriage, stretch of fields — but they also tell a story.

Consider a little known painting, never exhibited before: the portrait on horseback of Lord Pigot of Patshull. Lord Pigot, for all he is plainly dressed in a blue coat, white breeches and three-cornered hat, is seated on a white charger whose tail brushes the ground and whose raised foreleg and tensely arched neck recall innumerable grand equestrian statues in city squares. He is, as Judy Egerton remarks, 'probably the flashiest animal in the whole of Stubbs's work'. But before the horse you notice the rider's face, looking straight out and down at you with an expression you'd only see now on the face of a TV mogul. Who is this self-esteeming fellow, posed like a military commander against his country acres? Stubbs's deadpan exactitude arouses your curiosity and Egerton's catalogue satisfies it. Pigot was a writer in the East India Company who rose to be Governor of the English fort at Madras, returned to England with a fortune, acquired an Irish peerage and was described by a contemporary as 'a man of great spirit and . . . in general honourable, but of excessive vanity and overbearing despotism'. After the picture was painted, he ran short of money, went back

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to Madras, fell foul of his own council, was imprisoned by them and mysteriously died in confinement. Stubbs, of course, was not to know the end of the story, but its essential ingredient, the character of the man Pigot in his time and place, is as miraculously laid out in paint for the eye as a Sheridan might have laid it out in dialogue for the ear.

Sometimes the horse is the chief protagonist of the drama, as in the great life-size painting of 'Hambletonian, Rubbing Down', which concludes the exhibition. Against the bare levels of Newmarket Heath, Hambletonian stretches right across the 12-foot-long canvas, freshly victorious by half a neck from his 3,000 guinea race against Diamond, his teeth bared, his legs still half pounding, the muscles of his neck taut and his ribs visible under the skin pitted with the marks of the spur. The stable-boy rubbing him down and the trainer in top hat and long coat holding him look out at us, their faces unsmiling, their expressions equivocal. Are they pleased by the victory or disapproving of the damage that may have been done to the horse? Probably neither. They are posing for their employer's celebratory picture, secondary figures in the drama, and Stubbs has shown them in all their secondariness, half involved, half not, like the mechanics in a garage standing beside a rich client's expensive car. In other paintings, the grooms, jockeys, trainers, stable-boys may be more involved or less self-conscious about not being so, but it seems hardly accidental that Stubbs had to sue Sir Henry Vane-Tempest, Bt, the owner of Hambletonian, for his payment. That story too is intrinsic to the painting.

These are two examples, but there is hardly a painting in the exhibition which is not in this subtle way a slice of life. What Stubbs shows is not only what he was asked and paid to show, but also what he saw and knew. He is not a deliberately subversive artist, 'never a moralist in the sense that Hogarth is', as Egerton writes, but by always homing in on the truth of an expression, a physique, a relationship, he cannot help uncovering the nature of that small section of late 18th-century English society which employed him.

The landscape remains Arcadian; nobody, except the lions, actually bites anybody else; yet it is not a world any of us now, except perhaps those who are satisfied they would have been owners and happy to have been so, would care to inhabit, for it is based on such a deep division between man and man. The horses are not only (as in the last of Gulliver's travels) the noblest element in it, but also its binding force: good support and guineas gained to the masters, close companions and a means of living to the servants. But when it comes to the second of the two great harvest paintings acquired by the Tate in 1977, in which Stubbs depicts field labourers rather than grooms, jockeys or huntsmen, the horse ridden by the overseer and the way that the labourers have to look up at him, serve to emphasise rather than disguise the division, even though the picture as a whole, with its ripe sheaves, golden haze and the freshly laundered costumes of the reapers could hardly appear a better advertisement for the happiness and plenty of an England run by the aristocracy. Certainly Mr Stubbs was a horse-painter, but of a uniquely searching kind. □

FILMS

Coal comfort

Francis Wheen

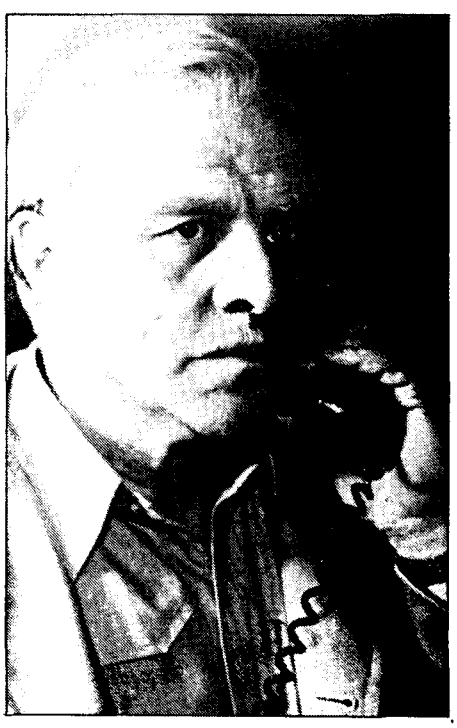
Strikebound (PG)
Screen on the Green
Private Life (PG)
Phoenix, East Finchley
Tightrope (18)
Warner West End; Classic, Oxford Street; ABCs, Shaftesbury Avenue etc.

STRIKING MINERS hurl abuse at the 'scabs' on the other side of the padlocked gate, who are 'protected' by the police. At a meeting of the strikers, a Labour MP is heckled for his lukewarm attitude.

Sounds familiar? The British release of Richard Lowenstein's first feature, **Strikebound**, could hardly be more timely. It is the true story of a successful mining strike in the small Australian town of Korumburra in the 1930s and of the part played in that strike by a remarkable pair of Scottish immigrants, Agnes and Wattie Doig. Wattie was a face-worker and a Communist; Agnes was a school-teacher and Salvation Army member who — initially, at least — disapproved of her husband's rumbustious militancy.

The incongruity of this odd couple is symbolised — rather too neatly, perhaps — by a scene in which Agnes attends a Sally Army service while her husband is chairing the inaugural meeting of the local Communist Party next door. The comrades' rousing rendition of 'The Red Flag' eventually drowns the God-squaddies' singing of 'Onward Christian Soldiers'.

Agnes soon discards her uniform, lets down her hair and organises a 'Women's Auxiliary' to provide support for the strikers. The film is infuriatingly unrevealing about this transformation. Certainly we have already been given plenty of clues that, although she may not care for some of the violence meted out to scabs, Agnes has a powerful loyalty to Wattie and his colleagues: she heckles the equivocating Labour MP, berates the local police chief for siding with the bosses and stamps on the hand of an unfortunate scab who, pursued down the high street by Wattie, stumbles in front of Agnes and her Salvation Army band. Nevertheless, the renunciation of religious ties is usually a difficult and painful experience; here it seems so effortless that it might never have happened.



Mikhail Ulyanov getting no *Private Life*

Still, it would be churlish to make too much of this complaint in connection with what is, by any standards, an astonishing debut. Lowenstein is 24 years old but already knows how to realise his visual ideas. For the opening shot the screen is dark except for a few lights bobbing about like fireflies — the Davy lamps of miners coming up from the pit. The tyranny of the coal-face and the tumult of the picket line are brilliantly caught in a fast-moving series of close-ups. Carol Burns and Chris Haywood in the two main roles are unimprovable. There is even a brief appearance by the real Agnes and Wattie, now in their eighties and still very much alive.

Private Life is directed by Yuli Raizman, whose seven decades of work in the Soviet cinema have just been celebrated with a season at the NFT. It is a quietly convincing film about a successful business manager, Sergei Abrikosov (wonderfully played by Mikhail Ulyanov), who suddenly loses his job and finds himself trapped in his flat with people whom he hasn't spoken to for years, including his second wife (Ya Savvina in top form) and his layabout son. As he morosely munches his breakfast on his first day of retirement, Sergei is asked by the son's live-in girlfriend: 'Have you a hobby of any kind?' He looks gloomier than ever: 'Like collecting match boxes, you mean?'

Although Sergei's flat is palatial by Soviet standards, Raizman makes it seem a highly believable prison, with members of the family lurking behind every door. All escape routes are blocked: his company car and his cottage in the country have been taken away; he visits an old friend who turns out to have died two years earlier; his ex-secretary rejects his advances. At last he resigns himself to his family. 'Tell me about yourself,' he says to his wife. When she does, it transpires that they are rather fond of each other after all. But at the end of the film he is offered another job. Will he accept it and sacrifice his new rapport with his family? Raizman doesn't say, but he doesn't have to: his interest here is in domestic alienation and claustrophobia, and these are represented with painful accuracy.

In **Tightrope**, Clint Eastwood plays a cop who . . . no, it isn't another Dirty Harry yarn. This time Clint's cop is a single father who tracks down a sex-killer and falls in love with a woman who runs a Rape Crisis Centre (Genevieve Bujold). Don't let that mislead you into thinking that there's anything remotely feminist about *Tightrope*. It is a repulsively misogynist movie in which the Yorkshire Ripper story is set in New Orleans. Eastwood

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is, in fact, a more glamorous version of George Oldfield, the rozzer who made such a mess of the Ripper investigation: he sees it as a battle between him and the killer, while the women victims are made to seem almost peripheral. After all, most of them were only prostitutes. To be avoided, unless you want to picket the cinemas which give house-room to this nocturnal emission. □

DANCE

Limbering up

Stephanie Jordan

Dance Umbrella '84
Performing Clothes
ICA

UNTIL THIS YEAR, the **Dance Umbrella** has been manic, its few weeks so packed with events that even those people most enthusiastic for independent dance risked exhaustion. But, in this its sixth year, the same number of events as last year is spread over seven weeks, allowing more time for evaluation of the newest in spirit, probably the best and sometimes the most difficult of today's dance activity. Another advance is in the securing of Sadler's Wells Theatre as a larger festival venue: good houses for the two US companies accommodated there have proved the value of this enterprise. Elsewhere, too, audiences are larger.

So far, the festival has been dominated by Americans. Of all of them, Mark Morris and Dancers at The Place were the most intriguing. Morris, a dark curlyhead, and his two companions were seen in short pieces ranging widely in subject matter and accompaniment. The style is idiosyncratic, most strongly characterised by daring, even a clumsiness that can, incredibly, go hand in hand with extreme rhythmic precision, but also soft suppleness and high speed. Humour is a characteristic, though hardly the constant that kept part of the audience sniggering throughout.

I cared less for Morris's *The End of a Perfect Day*, with its obvious humour (set to an Irish ballad, Morris in underpants, paper bag over his head, whimsical drawings) and more for the pieces where the comedy was less earnest and emerged through wickedness of musicality and motion: *Love You Have Won*, for instance, and its fanciful Baroque insolence as Morris and Guillermo Resto visualise the gestures of a Vivaldi aria as well as the dance and courtly attitudes of that period.

Two works weren't necessarily funny at all: *Bijoux*, a solo for Penny Hutchinson, a series of brief, charismatic vignettes to Satie, like a child's emulation of the grand soloist, out there, strutting and posing before her public. *Slugfest* is a wrestling match, raw, in silence, man and woman combat determined by rules on separating and setting to, resulting in some fascinating, if troublesome entanglement:

Money permitting, Morris would have brought some of his works for larger groups. *Songs That Tell a Story* mimics some of the Louvin Brothers' Bible Belt songs quite without irony, but furnishes little miracles of pattern, rhythm and literal implication. We must see Morris on a bigger scale.

After Morris, the American imports were disappointing. Bill T. Jones and Arnie Zane, bringing over their whole company for the first time, offered a full evening work *Freedom of Information 1984*: a couple of poems by Jones and a dance in three sections, fast-slow (around a shiny white frame)-fast. I must presume that the dance is yet another metaphor for Life as seen from Midtown Manhattan, judging by the whizzing, semaphore arms, sudden halts and acrobatic stunts. What was a captivating collection of gestures and sensitive repartee between Jones and Zane in duet has become, with their group, weary formula.

Tim Buckley and The Troublemakers represent the same kind of flash, desperate dancing that again, as the mainstay of the work, falls quickly flat. The pieces slammed on to the stage, *Barn Fever* (excerpts from) and *How to Swing a Dog* are essentially the same, but for their props (brooms in one, rubber animals in the other): both to driving music by a dishevelled if benign onstage pianist 'Blue' Gene Tyranny. Buckley's aggression is of the uncommitted kind, casual throwaway, the company quartet like your typical loveable band of Manhattan teenagers, marshalling their effort into regular pulses and formations reminiscent of square dancing, kicking, falling and hauling themselves up to trek the same

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plain pathways all over again.

There is much evidence now of an American postmodernism that celebrates high energy and insistent dance behaviour to the point of hysteria. At this stage of terminal artistic neurosis, the choreographic product defies analysis.

Lar Lubovitch, who has been around longest of any of this season's Americans, has at least avoided this unpleasant condition. He is one of the cleverest choreographers at manipulating bodies to make patterns and shapes. The wave simulations to Philip Glass in *North Star* can be attractively mesmerising and some of the fall/rebound moves look fun to do. But a large dose of this choreographer is sedative. The individual dance phrases look like a paper and paste job, additive construction of a rudimentary kind; Lubovitch changes tack uncomfortably. After two performances, I could remember very little about the dancers except that Rob Besserer and Peggy Baker were strong, impressive, the tall pair of the company. Lubovitch is a choreographer without a style and he doesn't understand the individuality of the people whom he sets in motion.

Sometimes unseemly, always lively and rugged, Michael Clark's work responds to the richness of human possibility, an approach which is far more interesting than the reduction of it. *Morag's Wedding*, performed by Newcastle-based English Dance Theatre, sprawls out of its frame (literally, at one point) with ideas. Clark depicts his kilted Scottish kinsmen, sentimental about their rituals, straight and proper (never more than at a wedding) but ripe for the post-nuptial binge, whereat Scots become sots and the scrupulous bibulous. Thus, one unruly guest obscenely hectors the audience from the gangway and another scrabbles about like a dog. The conclusion is unconsciousness and the wail of police sirens. The piece is fragmentary, one scene dissolving quickly into the next, shocking shifts from traditional to rock music and an affectionate mixture of Scottish dancing, ballet, Clark-style, that allows you to see the serious beauty of Clark's sources.

Leigh Bowery has devised exuberant versions of traditional Scottish gear: shorts for the veiled bride or the vast-waisted fur-topped outfit for her mother. Unfortunately, we are unlikely to see this piece again in London. The rest of the EDT repertoire is decidedly dull, the departure of the excellent Julie Hood to Clark's own company leaving an unfillable gap in their personnel.

Signs are for Umbrella '84 that the best is yet to come, as the number of performers and events rises and we see evidence of the recent boom in the quality of indigenous work.

Meanwhile, at the ICA, familiar faces and names from independent dance have been used to great effect in an outstanding display of the mordant/anarchic end of British fashion, **Performing Clothes**. Directed by Michael Morris, scripted by David Gale, set designed by Piers Gough and choreographed by Micha Bergese, the singers, dancers and actors were equally adept in comedy, movement and the prime function of being animated window displays for the wondrous creations from houses like Judy Blame, English Eccentrics and the ubiquitous Leigh Bowery. □

THEATRE

Too late

Benedict Nightingale

Tramway Road
RONALD HARWOOD *Lyric, Hammersmith*

IN HIS recently-published *Notebooks*, necessary reading for anyone who wishes to look into the heart either of a fine writer or of a mean country, Athol Fugard recalls the local swimming-bath manager interrupting tea at his mother's cafe in Port Elizabeth with a shout of 'look what tried to get in'. Disappearing down the path outside was a small boy with a towel dangling forlornly from his fist. 'He's a coloured,' declared the manager triumphantly. 'Told me a lie, said he went to the Marist Brothers. He's a coloured, man, I know his mother.' A tiny incident, but one that left the young Fugard pertinently agonising. What did that child say, or ask, or reply to himself? How did he fit that rejection into the tentative pattern of his living? What *was* that pattern?

Ronald Harwood's *Tramway Road* is set a few years earlier, when the South African government was beginning officially to register its subjects according to racial tint; and it asks some of the same questions about an adolescent who finds himself similarly docketed. Emil looks white, feels white, thinks white. Indeed, he's planning the same trip to drama school in London that Harwood himself made from the same place, Capetown, at the same time, 1951. His sudden classification as a member of a serf class ends all that. It costs him speech classes, travelling scholarship, passport — and, if I'm interpreting the loud offstage noises at the end correctly, rather more than that.

Actually, Emil's disasters mostly occur offstage. We see him in hope and apprehension, not in grief and bitterness and inarticulate longing for revenge. Those particular emotions are instead evoked for us by what are, as it turns out, Harwood's main characters, the boy's speech and drama coach and his alcoholic spouse. They're immigrants from England, both nostalgic custodians of the culture they remember, if somewhat at odds about the hard new world into which they've been plunged. Arthur is given to high-minded sentiment along the lines of 'art is classless and knows no colour bar'; Dora is too preoccupied with another sort of bar to take much interest in what she anyway seems to see as a sub-species. She has no scruple about drunkenly chattering in front of the black houseboy about his people's funny fingernails, the odd hues of their necks and their oppressively pungent stench.

Take those contrasting opinions about the host country, add Arthur's schoolmasterly encouragement and endless protestations of affection for the trusting Emil, and you've pretty much all there is to the first half. The second consists almost entirely of a long, boozy, pre-dawn post-mortem, full of recrimination and marital rancour and the sound of windbags being punctured. Though his exile in South

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Africa occurred because of some unspecified but presumably homosexual scandal back in Britain, Arthur hasn't been able to identify with his pupil as a fellow-outsider. On the contrary, he's now rejected him in panic, abjectly explaining, 'I want animal comfort, I want no more danger and despair.' It's his wife, the unthinking racialist, who finds herself raging against injustice. She didn't much like Emil; but 'you can't suddenly be a person one day, and not a person the next'.

It's not altogether a plausible reversal of roles, for all the expertise of the performers swapping them. Annette Crosbie comes off the more credibly, achieving a blend of the spiky and the scatty which suggests that Dora's surge of moral feeling is perfectly honest yet probably also impermanent. But all Freddie Jones's woebegone skills and dandruffy charisma — and he has, I think, the most eloquently frazzled head of hair in the British theatre — cannot conceal something a bit neat, a bit glib in the evolution of the character he's playing. Arthur is too obviously that representative figure, the cowardly liberal whom Fugard berates in his *Notebooks* for denouncing apartheid 'provided it involves no sacrifices'.

Not that *Tramway Road* is unenjoyable. It's forbiddingly set in a grey pebble-dash house, with grey walls and even grey books on grey shelves for its grey-haired, grey-faced characters, but it can't be rated grey or dull itself. At any rate, David Jones's production has momentum and tension enough to keep us from brooding about its failure to achieve quite the texture or depth of Harwood's earlier *Dresser*. It also leaves you with the feeling he presumably wanted, that of the bafflement of ordinary people floundering in the South African whirlpool. We'll vote United Party, Crosbie and Jones tell each other, and all this will be forgotten in 20, 30 years' time; but you can see from their faces they don't believe it.

All the same, I wonder if the most rewarding contribution Harwood could make to the South African files is to show two fugitives from a William Trevor novel confusedly reacting to the beginnings of apartheid. After all that's happened since 1951, their genteel dismay wouldn't seem to matter that much. With everything that's been written since then, not least for the theatre, *Tramway Road* is bound to look a bit marginal.

We've seen two wrangling black beggars trek through the outback after their shanty town has been bulldozed away, a white woman and a coloured man incoherently justify themselves after being caught in bed by police snoopers with flashguns, political prisoners on Robben Island ordered by cackling warders to manhandle down trees and 'empty the sea', a woman run stark mad after Special Branch has read her private diaries and her husband has been unjustly accused of betraying his fellow-strugglers for equality, a young white spit in the face of his black friend in a sudden outburst of racial spleen, and much, much more. Not everyone can be Fugard, who gave the world all this. Not everyone should be Fugard. But the efforts of Fugard and his South African followers do, let's admit, leave us expecting something pretty substantial from any dramatist who goes foraging in those same stony fields. □

Christine Roche

Playing with Wazungu

Jonathan Falla

KENYA (Nairobi-Mombasa train): At nightfall, Fisher, whom I had never met before, sat down with me at the only remaining table in the dining car and asked what I was reading — which was the Oxford 'Standard' Swahili dictionary, a title whose arrogance is only partially mitigated by its being the only decent dictionary available.

'Ah, yes, now then,' he said, and took the dictionary from me as he settled. He matched the pre-war rolling stock better than I, his caricature ex-RAF manner, tropical suit and cravat with Spitfires quite in place in the rich purple plush and mahogony fittings, tended by black servants. Personally I prefer the other old dining car on the line, the one with glass partitions engraved with East African birds.

'Listen to this.' He turned the pages. 'I'll bet you've never realised how many other uses the Swahili have for the word *mzungu*.'

'It means a European,' I offered, half-listening, watching the buck, giraffe and zebra swerving away from the line and bolting for the horizon in the dusk over the grey-fawn upland plain.

'But listen!' he insisted. '*Mzungu* — also, the picture cards in a playing deck. English kings and queens, for God's sake!'

And knaves, of course. Two-dimensional foreign oppressors in flash regalia. Fisher read on.

'Or it means, "Something wonderful, startling, surprising, ingenuity, cleverness" — synonymous with European, you see?'

He sipped his Tusker beer. The next meaning that he read out, however, threw a different shadow.

'*Mzungu* — any device or expedient for getting out of a difficulty.'

Skulking deviousness, the capture of the citadel by a ruse, betrayal of allies, welching on a treaty. This, it seemed, came naturally to Europeans, as Fisher pronounced.

'*Mzungu* — instinct in animals, as in "every bug follows its *mzungu*".'

He paused, wondering whether that could possibly be a slur on himself and fellow settlers who had 'stayed on' — then thankfully remembered the young tourists, the Great Unwashed sunning themselves on the coast at Malindi.

'Is that the lot?' I asked.

'By no means. "In the plural, *wazungu* — the teachings given to young girls when they reach puberty or in initiation rites." As in, I suppose, "Don't play with your *wazungu*, or you'll go blind, or worse!" Ha ha!'

The waiter, a deferent teenager in immaculate but overlarge whites, took our order. Fisher, studiously not looking at him, called for fried fish.

'Served, inevitably, with cassava. Which,' he

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triumphed, 'is the final meaning of *mzungu* — a type of cassava!'

A root vegetable which must be carefully boiled to remove the prussic acid. Was that how Kenyans saw us, then? Something to be pulled up out of the dirt, chockfull of poison but sadly necessary to the economy. Fisher drank down his Tusker and spoke for a while of things he appreciated — giraffes, Cambridge architecture, choral polyphony in Kings Chapel. I looked at the passing landscape and remarked on how much I was enjoying the journey. This was a mistake; he was less than content.

'Bloody lights don't work in my compartment. Which is just Kenya, isn't it? I suppose the bulbs blew sometime last year.'

Still, I said, he could hardly fail to enjoy the scenery.

'Even that can get oppressive. We have a phrase for it: MMBA.'

I looked suitably blank.

'Miles and miles of bloody Africa.'

At this point the meal arrived and Fisher immediately lost his temper.

'Christ, this muck is boiled!'

The outburst was sufficient to drive the young waiter back in confusion. The Chief Steward came to his rescue.

'My sincere apologies, Sir; there has been an error. May I offer you fried chicken?'

Fisher grumpily assented. It was now almost dark outside and the wind was flapping the purple curtain in his face. He tried unsuccessfully to tuck it back, then snapped a finger at the waiter.

'Close this.'

The boy leaned across the table and grasped the top of the wooden louvred shutter. But it was stuck, and his slight figure and awkward position made it impossible for him to raise it. He stood back uncertainly. Fisher at last looked straight at the black.

'I said, close it.'

The boy tried again but with no success. Fisher bawled, 'Christ, does nothing work in this bloody train?' and, slamming his hand hard up against the slats, freed the shutter and sent it upwards. The boy could not remove his fingers in time — they were caught and crushed at the top. Whipping his hands back, he hugged them to his belly and staggered weeping into the kitchen.

'Right.'

Fisher sat back and his manner altered instantly as he turned again to consider the works of God and man.

'Ah, you know, I have often thought of the giraffe's neck in terms of Gothic flying buttresses. . .' □

Jonathan Falla's play Topakana Martyrs Day *was produced at the Bush Theatre in 1983.*

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Naseem Khan

Fresh wind

'WHAT is a festival?' Dr Johnson once rhetorically asked. 'Crowds without company,' he answered himself glumly, 'mirth without merriment. . .That is a festival.' Even nowadays, when the festival has become a regular art form, there are times when it's easy to agree with him. Among the plethora of annual festivals (240 with some professional arts content: a growth of 33% over the past seven years), from the specialist ones like the Three Choirs Festival to the politically generated like Liverpool's Gardens Festival, there are many that provoke, if not the question 'What?', then 'Why?'. What is the point of it? Who is it there for? Wouldn't the money have been better spent (though less prestigiously) on improved local arts provision the year round?

Edinburgh City Council's reservations about its festival ought to turn the attention onto a genre that has grown quietly and almost unchallenged since the war. Spiritual descendants of the Festival of Britain, do they still answer current need?

Cheltenham's Festival of Literature, which finished last week, is one of the ones that could answer those questions with a clear conscience. Forty-nine years old, it has grown into one of the most interesting of Britain's varied festivals. Indeed, it could even end up ahead financially. With a festival that was over 70% pre-booked, its director Gordon Parsons had the luxury of worrying about that percentage. This year he hoped to have made around £10,000 on the box office — not huge, but still better than the deficits of other arts events.

Of course, as a civic festival, Cheltenham has less pressure than others: premises, running costs and administration are all absorbed by the town hall. And Parsons has had an outstandingly good year with business sponsorship, due to a lucky chance meeting with a key local businessman. The figure raised is 400% up on the amount three years ago. Almost every event in the extremely full programme — three years ago they had only one event per night — is credited to a different concern. Paul Foot met his audiences courtesy of Spirax Sarco, while his uncle Michael was sponsored by Texas Homecare. George Mikes was supported in his reminiscences of Koestler by European Schoolbooks, while most of the lunchtime poets were aptly sponsored by Penguin Books. It is a record that Rittner and Rees-Mogg of the Arts Council would applaud.

Obviously, though, the point of Cheltenham is not to make money. What *was* it? I asked Parsons, who looked slightly hunted and then muttered, 'It's to celebrate literature.' He gave a more satisfactory answer later when he introduced Irish poet Paul Muldoon and Gaelic poet Sorley Maclean at their lunchtime reading. Cheltenham, he then said (with a bit of licence), was more or less in the middle of England and had to guard against parochialism; Muldoon and Maclean were fresh winds from the outside. Opening up, stimulating, informing seem highly reasonable reasons for a festival. Even Johnson could have agreed.

Some winds at Cheltenham were fresher than others. Paul Foot, for instance, blew in like a benign gale, sweeping scornfully before him all the assumptions that Orwell had deserted Socialism. George Mikes' memories of his friend Koestler had less dash and vigour.

The most ambitious event was probably Cheltenham's prestige debate, with its brave title 'Literature: What, Why, How?'. Brave it might have seemed; suicidal it turned out. Full of vague unconnected statements from cultural pundits Marghanita Laski, Richard Hoggart, Ian McEwan and David Edgar about literature, life, whether *Dallas* was popular fiction, if nuclear annihilation affected literature, if drama differed from fiction and much else. The ex-arts editor of the *Financial Times* opened a slow floor discussion with the statement: 'There is no need at all to give money to writers. If people want to write, they will write.' And was warmly applauded by the right side of the hall. Lord Longford, in front of me, stayed silent. Bryan Appleyard, looking kinder than the tough scowling photograph on his dustjacket, made minimal attempts to pull the argument together from his place in the chair. Maybe he'd worked out it was hopeless.

All festivals of course have their low spots and the prestige debate is notoriously difficult to stage manage. Where Cheltenham did score, however, was in the conscious way it had shaped its eight days' programme. A lot of festivals follow the ragbag formula, a repository for a lot of art forms that happen to be passing. Like a kind of cultural Brent Cross, they leave you feeling sated rather than satisfied.

Not so Cheltenham. As last year, Parsons had selected a backbone or theme. Sparked off by the bi-centenary of Johnson's death and the arrival of the year 1984, this year's festival concentrated on both Johnson and Orwell and, moving on from them, on criticism and censorship at large. The device is both simple and sensible and lends itself to a sense of having, to some extent, walked a bit around a subject. Themes laid down in one event could surface again or even be contradicted in another.

But what gave Cheltenham a final touch of reality was the topicality of its second theme. A year or so ago, Cheltenham wore a slightly comic public face: home of redundant colonels, county Sloanes, Ladies' College. GCHQ has changed all that. The reference was regularly made — directly, when a contingent from GCHQ came to a performance of 7:84's play about the Tolpuddle Martyrs, *Six Men of Dorset*, which was cheered to the roof; indirectly in Paul Foot's bracing rehabilitation of Orwell; tangentially with Stephen Spender's opening selection of readings from the works of oppressed and censored writers.

Festivals — even the good ones — tend to display rather than comment. It was Cheltenham's strength this year that it could do both. □

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TELEVISION

Hugo Williams

Top dreck

EVERYONE'S TV gives off its own particular type of programme, reflecting the character of its owner in the same way as a dog or socks or a lavatory.

Mine is conscientiously cheerful — like life on board a submarine. An academic friend's produces nothing but argument and ill feeling, even behind his back. Another's, a publisher's, is full of reminiscences and unexpected guest appearances by people you thought were dead, who turn out to have written a picture book. Some young people's sets are in black and white, which makes everything seem fresh and camp. I think other people's televisions are more interesting than yours because you're there socially, not lethargically, and can't appear to be watching too closely if you've only just arrived.

It was in this way, not through any deliberate perversion, that I caught sight of Cilla Black's new show **Surprise Surprise** (ITV) last weekend. Gradually the occasion became silent as we began to realise what was happening over on the TV table. It looked like a mixture of *This is Your Life* and *Summer Holiday*, with Cilla as Eammon Andrews hijacking a bus driver with the 'Surprise' that she was going to use his bus to do a production number on for her show. He shrugged, too old to resist, and Cilla began ringing his bell and lunging round the upper deck of his bus miming a travel song while the passengers glued smiles to their faces in case they woke up. This was a throwback to the days before BBC-2, when your set had to be locked on either BBC or ITV depending on whether you could read or not. It is a sign of the times that the big cash prizes of early advertising telly have turned into the presenter him or herself, mugging and doing a sort of forfeit on a double-decker in case the Americans can be interested.

More alien TV was experienced in the shape of two female cop-shows in the same evening. A coincidence or a leader-related trend? One of the cops was actually called 'Maggie', but she had a left-wing aura and put on a whiny rag-trade voice to muffle some of her otherwise porcelain vowels.

The Gentle Touch (ITV) is one of those series where the cop has a private life. It is modelled on the *Lou Grant/Hill Street Blues* frame, where scene relevance emerges only in retrospect to keep you barking up the wrong tree. Stories are presented back to front, as mysteries. A man's wife has left him. he searches for her on double-decker buses, carrying a set of bathroom scales. Ah, but why? Meanwhile a hateable girl is hanging round the Inspector's old man. She is the party type but never lets anyone into her flat. Why not? The answer is that they have to keep you watching till the second commercial break, but in case you were absent, the husband has murdered his wife with the scales and the socialite has a secret daughter imprisoned in her hideout. Not bad, but the slumming central character is too screwed up to be still in the force.

If *The Gentle Touch* is the distaff descendant of *Softly Softly*, **Juliet Bravo** (BBC-1) comes to us via *Dixon of Dock Green*. Anne Carteret as Inspector Kate Longton is more cuddly than cudgelly. She looks like Lulu in a Checker cab bowler and her subordinates keep up a constant sexual innuendo, which she encourages. Last week's show, in honour of Hallowe'en, was an old vampire movie with the traditional last-reel arrival of authority distributed evenly throughout the story, like a sub-plot: 'Is that what they call a pentacle, Joe?' 'The house is so cold, Joe. There's an awful chill there.' 'I think he's asserting some kind of bad influence on her, Joe.' The handsome vampire-type wants to pull the Inspector, but thanks to Joe's homely advice — 'Stick to what you know, Ma'am' — she pulls him in instead: for drinking.

THE NAME OF Alun Owen, seal of excellence in old black-and-white *Wednesday Play* days, was recommendation enough for **Lovers of the Lake** (C4), his adaptation of Sean O'Faolain's Catholic guilt quadrangle: husband, wife, lover, God.

The central image of the play was that of feet doing the rounds of roughened stones on an island retreat where an adulteress has been followed by her atheist lover. At first he is jealous, convinced she is looking for the strength to leave him: 'You come to your Druids in hope they can do it for you, by magic. Well, I've come to help you. I'm going to pray for you.' He has filled his pockets with chocolates and means to survive the weekend through sheer bloodymindedness. By Sunday morning he has thrown them away and is sharing the ordeal with her. 'Why don't you leave your husband?' 'Because I am married.' 'No, it's because he's rich and you like comfort.' Is he the devil? Or is he just a man fighting to regain the woman he loves? Two cameos of caricature Catholics — the guilt-ridden mother of six who can't stay away from men but receives an understanding word from her confessor, the widower who has made the pilgrimage for 22 years because he was never kind to his wife — bring the woman to the understanding that love of man is the same as love of God and so she lets herself go back to the man she loves rather than make a penance of her life. Or so I read the story.

At first I thought it was a piece of coffee-table erotica along the lines of David Hamilton's excruciating first-period-pain photos, its misty greens and blues and weird moral convulsions about as far off as the Druids. But, as the play settled in the mind, its period quaintness turned into metaphorical truth, like a Greek myth or Freudian case-history.

There was a Druid rune-master squatting under a tree in the grounds of **Pebble Mill** (BBC-1) last Tuesday, plying his mysteries and conversing with the stones for the benefit of the embarrassed Marian Foster. He looked cool in his cowl, but his presence there turned out to have less to do with the remains of Viking culture than the publication in paperback of the *Book of Runes*, which came with its own set of runing pebbles. □

Weekend competition

No 2846 **Set by A. Boteman**

Lullabies or nursery songs updated for singing to the young Prince Henry. Max. 10 lines. By Wednesday 14 November.

No 2843 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

10-line extracts from Longfellow's 'Song of Mrs Thatcher'.

Report **By Maximilian Sneerwell**

I'm not surprised that the pages of the Complex edition of Longfellow (pub. OUP 1921) are still uncut. Hiawatha must be a front-runner for Most Boring Poem of All Time. Effect of imitating same therefore: many boring entries. According to John Stanley, Lewis Carroll said, 'Any fairly practised writer, with the slightest ear for rhythm, could compose for hours together, in the easy running metre of "The Song of Hiawatha".' Conclusion: *some* of you — I shall name no names *this* time — do not even have 'the slightest. . .etc'. And as for those who tried to sneak in 20 lines by doubling them up, well. . .I shall content myself with dispatching PC 49 with the usual cautions, *this* time. Mr Sharpless, however, gets a prize for accurately observing the contradiction involved in trying to 'do' the *ad infinitum* Longfellow so very briefly. Hon. menshes of the usual non-remunerative kind to Alan Clark, Naomi Marks, Basil Ransome-Davies, D.A. Prince, Titus Grant and Philip A. Nicholson and a Wellington for each printable entry.

Should you ask me whence this poem,
I will answer, I will tell you;
E.O. Parrott asked for something
In the style of Hiawatha,
With those haunting tumti-tumti
Short lines of reversed iambic,
But no sooner had I started
'Daughter of a Grantham grocer'
Than I had to stop abruptly,
Stymied by the ten-line limit.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

From the platform Margaret Thatcher
Cursed the miners in their pitstrike
Cursed their leader Arthur Scargill
Praised the coalman, hard McGregor
Praised his standing up to Scargill
Praised his love of Margaret Thatcher
Praised the Press for hating Scargill
Praised the judges and policemen
Cursed the bishops with their mitres
Cursed the left-wing leader writers.

NICHOLAS MURRAY

In the land of Twitchee-Glumee
In the great 10 Downing wigwam
Stood the Head-Squaw Mrs Thatcher
Praising Itchee-Ron the mighty
From his big White Tent he called her
Mini-Rah-Rah, Laughing Daughter,
Making with the Yankee-Pankee
Offered her the Fire-Boom-Trident
Full of clapped-out Micro-Chipees
For a lousy billion green ones . . .

GERRY HAMILL

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By the bed of Mrs Thatcher,
By the snaps of Grantham Old Girls,
Lay *The Thoughts of Chairman Milton*,
Guru of the Munne-taris,
Economic super-nutter
From the land of Morfah-uslot,
From the tribe of Imal-rytjac,
And she lived upon his diet,
On the sage without the onions,
With no brain beneath his wig-wam. . .

WILL BELLENGER

By the side of Gumma-gooni
Stood the shape of Maggi-thatcha;
Heard the jeers of all the jobless:
'Maggi-thatcha!' said the people,
'Give us wampum, we are starving!'
Went and had her little pow-wow
With the many braves around her;
'Yah-bah-soddem,' said her chieftains,
Sang a song of New Blue Freedom,
With that special sort of whitener. . .

LEW BELLRINGLE

To be spoken by John Cole
Then the deadly Mrs Thatcher,
grim and ghastly Mrs Thatcher,
raised her voice and sounded righteous —
like a high-pitched righteous tom-tom
pitched into the Cabinet choirboys,
sitting on their hands and wincing.
There was fall-out in her head-notes,
headache-making, piercing head-notes.
She created cold like Satan,
all who sat there winced and shivered.

GAVIN EWART

From her husband, Wis-Ki-Ha-Ha,
Wis-Ki-Ha-Ha, Laughing Spirit,
Turned the stone-heart Maggithatcha,
And she spoke into the camera,
And her eye was as the lizard,
And her hair was as the beehive,
And her voice was as the corncrake,
And her tongue was as the serpent,
But the dwellers in the backwoods
Did not rumble Maggithatcha.

GERARD BENSON

Then the old and wrinkled Runcie
Tried his best to reason with her,
Told her of the people standing
In the well-named, endless dole queue,
Told her of the wearied miners
Threatened in their toil by closures,
Told her of the folk of London
Wishing for a voice in Pow-wow,
But, alas, she never listened,
Never listened, Maggie Thatcher.

EVE RYMAN

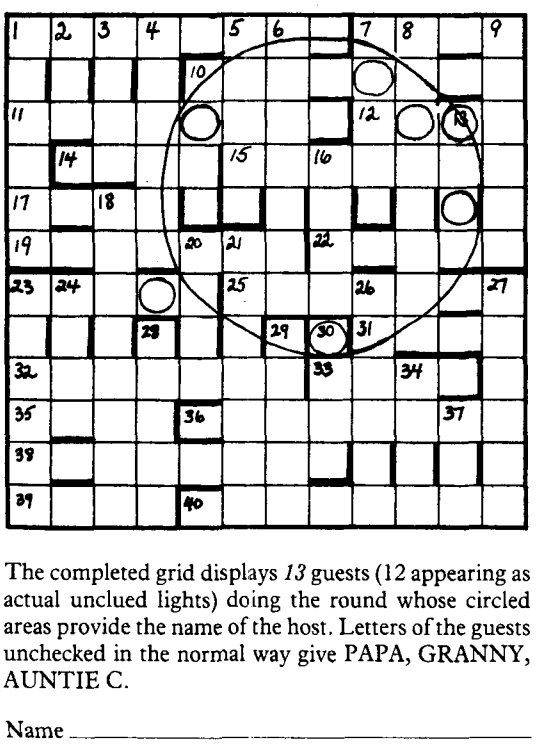
Missisthatcha called her council:
Heseltine the mighty hunter,
Lawson too, the mighty punter,
And she kept a place for Gum-Gum,
Brought her bow-wow to the pow-wow.
'How!' she said, and woke Sir Geoffrey,
But she huffed it and she puffed it
To her vertical ovation.
And they named her Mini-haha
For she was No Laughing Matter.

NOEL PETTY

Salamanca 87

'Attending The Grand Ball'

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 87, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 4 December.



The completed grid displays *13* guests (12 appearing as actual unclued lights) doing the round whose circled areas provide the name of the host. Letters of the guests unchecked in the normal way give PAPA, GRANNY, AUNTIE C.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

ACROSS

7 Opening that is to say against you (4)
11 Lovers who at the beginning of affair need to take time off (8)
12 Torn between two parts of the school curriculum? (4)
14 One in stale surrounding may be? (Strong when top's removed) (4)
17 Hills, uppermost of peaks in Greek Island (4)
19 Copy of book which swaps over its third and last short stories (7)
25 One's smooth final passes getting one to University? (7)
31 Not for eating, bad inside (4)
32 Adventurer landing a hero, say, and no getting away from it (7)
33 Trees you see round a river (4)
35 This you might have to associate with a ring? (4)
39 You'll find this officer among the bag handlers (4)

DOWN

2 Beer which almost makes you grimace (in silence) (3)
3 Bidding, one's to pass (4)
4 Singing the words to a song accompanied by a little bit of music? Not a note (6)
5 Small port's a feature of the topography there (5)
6 Summer's leave mostly it's involved with (7)
7 Awkward task: take in blasted Scots (5)
8 Who'll hinder small class, misbehaving? (8)
9 Fodder, e.g. tea one's consumed greedily (6)
13 I'm up and flying (nastily) (4)
16 Mark one with a club (4)
18 Potassium carbonate asar help in forming (8)
20 It's accepted to have Latin in religious language close to Sanskrit (4)
21 Snake, long one with rattling tail? That's it! (7)
24 Arable land's soft: here's a wide space (4)
26 Effects of this drug are cumulative perhaps, and not cute (6)
28 Trees stretching a mile (5)
29 Mounted soldier: features hard, see, in one (5)
30 Old head soldier (US) covering first lieutenant (4)
34 One's self content existence (4)
37 A load of ivy on this bush? (3)

Solution to Salamanca 86

P	H	A	L	L	C	O	N	E	O	B	O
O	A	R	D	A	R	T	A	G	N	A	N
R	H	A	L	L	U	I	L	D	E	L	E
T	A	M	A	L	E	C	L	U	E	L	I
H	A	I	L	L	B	Y	G	A	L	L	S
O	L	S	L	Y	E	B	O	N	E	A	D
S	L	O	W	L	Y	I	M	P	P	C	I
A	R	N	A	O	U	T	Y	O	R	E	S
T	O	E	U	G	E	S	O	N	E	A	L
H	U	E	R	G	L	A	N	E	S	K	I
O	N	E	H	A	I	L	E	D	T	I	K
S	D	S	S	T	A	L	L	W	O	N	E

'All for One, and One for All'/The Three Musketeers

Prizewinners to Salamanca 86

Gerry Griffin, Reading
Mrs D.M. Mackinnon, Galashiels
Irene Smith, Ealing

Solution to 1457

W	A	R	S	H	I	P		G	O	S	P	O	R	T
H		O		U		A		A		O		F		E
I	N	U	N	D	A	T	E	S		O	F	F	E	R
T		S		D		A		P		T		E		R
I	D	E	O	L	O	G	Y		C	H	A	N	G	E
N				E		O		P		I		D		N
G	A	P	S		I	N	D	I	A	N	F	I	L	E
		I		C		I		N		G		N		
J	A	C	K	A	N	A	P	E	S		A	G	E	S
U		K		S		N		M		S				T
S	W	E	E	T	S		D	A	R	T	M	O	O	R
T		R		I		I		R		R		C		O
I	C	I	E	R		B	E	T	R	O	T	H	A	L
C		N		O		I		E		U		R		L
E	N	G	I	N	E	S		N	O	D	D	E	R	S

Prizewinners to 1457

Joyce Anderson, Stirling
James Ewart, New Malden
Hugh Sweeny, York

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APPOINTMENTS

TRADE UNION RESEARCH

The Institution of Professional Civil Servants invites applications for a post of **Deputy Research Officer.**

Salary **£9,793-£12,029**. Six weeks holiday. Non-contributory pension scheme including the counting of approved superannuable employment prior to joining the Institution's service. Retirement at sixty.

A good honours degree or equivalent research experience and a knowledge of one or more of the following fields is desirable: Labour Economics, Industrial Relations, the Public Sector, Pay Structures and Conditions of Service arrangements. Skills in drafting policy papers and in the preparation of briefs over a wide range of subjects will also be important. Familiarity with micro-computers, although not essential, would be an additional advantage.

Letters of application should include particulars of age, educational qualifications, present and previous employment. They must be received by not later than **16 November 1984** and should be addressed to:

Monica Thompson, Assistant Secretary, Institution of Professional Civil Servants, 75-79 York Road, London SE1 7AQ.

The IPCS is an equal opportunities employer.

KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA TRADES UNION COUNCIL SUPPORT UNIT

GENERAL WORKER

required for the Support Unit to work with local trade union and labour movement. Experience of and commitment to the trade union and labour movement are more important than formal qualifications.

Experience of work in a multicultural environment desirable. Commitment to collective work essential.

Salary scale SO1. The post is GLC funded. Equal opportunities employer.

Application form and further details from: **TUSU, 49-53 Kensington High Street, London W8. (01-937 2511).**

Closing date 16 November.

ENGINEERS' AND MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Initial salary within a scale rising to £7,843 p.a. (subject to satisfactory performance, further progress to a scale rising to £9,547 is likely).

The EMA represents engineers, managers, scientists and professional staff generally in industry and particularly in the electricity, shipbuilding and aerospace industries.

We are seeking for our busy research department a numerate person, aware of current affairs, who is capable of analysing information and producing good quality briefing material on a wide variety of subjects covered by the research department, for example, pay, analysing the economy, superannuation, industrial relations matters and energy policy, with particular reference to safe nuclear energy.

Further written details and application forms — to be returned by not later than **19 November 1984** — may be obtained from: **Administration Manager, EMA, Station House, Fox Lane North, Chertsey, Surrey. (Tel: 09328 64131).**

City of Manchester — **HOUSING DEPARTMENT**

CREATING A BETTER FUTURE IN THE INNER CITY

HULME PROJECT TEAM

Re-advertisement.

Hulme Ward lies just south of Manchester City Centre and contains some of the City's worst Council flats. Most were built in the 1960s and 1970s, about 3,000 of them to the now notorious 'deck access' design. As well as bad housing the area suffers from enormous problems of social and economic deprivation.

The City Council has decided to bring about the gradual renewal of the area after detailed consultation and research have taken place. Liaison with residents of the area will be a crucial feature of the redevelopment process to try to avoid the mistakes of the last 20 years. A Project Team is being established in the Housing Department to co-ordinate this huge undertaking. Team members will also be seconded from other Council departments as necessary.

The Team will be based in Hulme and its members will be expected to display a high degree of commitment to the area and to its residents. We are looking initially for a:

PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR
£12,408—£13,725 (pay award pending)

He or she will lead the project team as well as having supervisory responsibility for the local estate management office. You must have a sympathy for and an understanding of inner city problems and an enthusiasm for overcoming them. A background in housing management is desirable but not essential. Above all you must be a first class manager and be able to communicate with people from a wide range of backgrounds. An ability to work under pressure is essential.

Please note that this part has been re-advertised to reflect a change in the salary originally offered. Previous applicants will be considered and need not reapply.

The City Council operates a Union Membership agreement under which a new employee is required to become a member of a recognised Union.

Application forms available from:
The Director of Housing, Personnel & Training Officer, Room M23, Mezzanine Floor, Town Hall Extension, Manchester 2. Tel: 061-236 3377 ext. 340. Closing date 16 November 1984.

An Equal Opportunity Employer.

GLC
Working for London

Part-Time Research Assistant
Police Committee Support Unit

This key Unit undertakes a broad range of research concerned with policing in London and produces a wide variety of information material, including a regular newsletter, discussion papers, policy reports and campaign publications.

Working as a member of a small research team, this post contributes to the research and preparation of information for use by community groups, MPs and others as well as briefing material for Members and speakers. The work involves liaison with grant-aided organisations and police monitoring groups and acting as GLC spokesperson at public meetings.

Experience of research/investigative work into policing, civil liberties or other linked areas is required, with a broad knowledge of London and the problems facing both community organisations and individuals. Must be skilled communicators, with writing experience and a flexible and co-operative approach and proven capacity to work under pressure to deadline.

Salary: £12,444-£14,076 inclusive pro rata.

LONDON AGAINST RACISM

The GLC is an equal opportunities employer. We invite applications from women and men from all sections of the community, irrespective of their ethnic origin, colour, sexual orientation or disability, who have the necessary attributes to do the job.

For an application form, to be returned by 9th November 1984, write to: GLC Director-General's Department, Ref: 4055, Room 203, The County Hall, SE1 7PB or telephone 01-633 1527/2390.

This post is suitable for job sharing

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YORK LABOUR PARTY

ORGANISER

Applications are invited for the post of full-time Secretary/Agent to York CLP. This is a national agency service appointment. Forms of application are obtainable from the **National Agent, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London, SE17 1JT**, to whom they should be returned not later than **Friday 30 November 1984**. *The salary and conditions are in accordance with the national agreement and the appointment is made in consultation with the National Executive Committee.*

York CLP has a well equipped city centre office. It is a highly marginal parliamentary constituency which had a Labour Member of Parliament continuously from 1966 to 1983. Labour holds minority control of the city council and ten of the fifteen county council seats within the constituency.

PART-TIME RESEARCHER

As a result of maternity, the Labour Research Department has a vacancy for a temporary part-time researcher in the areas of Local Government and Transport. The job runs from appointment (as soon as possible) to the end of September 1985.

Salary: £4,815 p.a. for a 17½ hour week.

Commitment to the trade union movement and knowledge of the areas to be covered essential.

Apply in writing by **Friday 16 November** to: **Secretary, L.R.D., 78 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF**

WELFARE STATE INTERNATIONAL

The touring company pioneering celebratory arts invites applications for the new post of

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

to research and develop new contexts for the company's live work, nationally and internationally, and to be responsible for its related initiatives in publishing, education, film and video. The successful applicant must demonstrate proven ability in marketing, fundraising and creative planning and a strong commitment to the arts as a force for social change.

Annual fee negotiable in the region of **£10,000**.

Further details from **WSI, P.O. Box 9, Ulverston, Cumbria.** Closing date for applications: **Monday, 19 November.**

CAMPAIGN AGAINST PLASTIC BULLETS requires full-time Organiser/Researcher. Looking for someone with organising ability, initiative and communication skills. Relevant campaigning experience and knowledge of related policing issues preferred. Salary £9,345, funded for one year by GLC. Further details and application form from: BSSRS, 9 Poland Street, W1V 3DG.

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DRISCOLL HOUSE, 200 single rooms, p.b. £50 p.w. 172 New Kent Rd, London SE1. 01-703 4175.

HOLIDAY FLATS/Houses to let. King's Cross, London. Telephone 01-607 4518.

NON-SMOKING FEMALE, over 25, wanted for large room in artist's house in West London, own kitchen, bathroom, phone, central heating included in rent, £38 plus two evenings baby-sitting per week. Box 9568.

ACCOMMODATION WANTED

British Council for Refugees

COULD YOU OFFER HOSPITALITY to a REFUGEE

for a few days over Christmas?

Contact: Pat Strickland, Basle Court, 2b Fairmount Road, London SW2 1AD

Tel. 01-671 4481

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

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AUTHORS INVITED submit Manuscripts. All types (including Poems) for book publication. Reasonable terms. Stockwell Ltd, Ilfracombe, Devon. (Established 1898).

BOOKS AND magazines found. O/P and S/H. Full 'wants' details: 'Scoops', 95 Irving Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset BH6 5BH.

ECONOMICS COLLECTIONS BOUGHT. Also review copies. Politics, History, Sociology, ECONOMISTS' BOOKSHOP, Secondhand Dept. Ring for appointment. 01-405 8643.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822.

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in the fields of
Co-operatives, Charities, Companies Limited by guarantee and other democratic and community based organisations.

Sinclair Taylor & Martin, Solicitors of: 9 Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL Tel. 01-969 3667

HOLIDAYS/TRAVEL

CUBA. Fortnightly holidays available, including six day tour of Cuba. Contact: Ashley Holidays 0709 544083.

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA. Low cost flights, holiday journeys. 3-6 weeks. JLA, 16 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD. 01-747 3108.

TRAVEL BARGAINS FOR CHRISTMAS AND 1985

Considerable reductions for schools and other parties

MOSCOW by sleeper train £180
22 Dec.—1 Jan. & 5/15 April. Full board & sightseeing in USSR (KIEV cost only £170)

SAMARKAND £275 22 Dec.—5 Jan.
Also 3 days Moscow and 3 day Tashkent

TASHKENT, INCLUDES full board and sight-seeing in USSR.

LAKE GARDA, VENICE, VERONA, COMO £125
23 Dec.—1 Jan. & 5-14 April INCLUDES breakfasts, dinners & touring programme.

NAPLES, CAPRI, POMPEII
23-31 Dec. £145
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Includes all breakfasts & dinners at hotel & full touring to **Capri, Pompeii, Herculaneum & Vesuvius.**

YORKSHIRE TOURS
49 Thornton Lodge Road
Huddersfield HD1 3JQ.
Tel: 0484 24269

LISTINGS

SAT 3 NOV

LONDON 'Alive and Kicking' — Entertainment at Left Alive Conf. 8-11pm City University, St. John Street, EC1. Cabaret from Hank Wangford, 'Sensible Footwear', Benjamin Zephaniah in the New Hall & Music in the Bar from 'The Spectres', 'Persons Unknown'. Tickets bked in advance from 01-251 4406 £3/£2 UB40 or £4/£3 UB40 at door (separate from left Alive).

LONDON London Wildlife Trust Conservation wkend at Lamerton St. and Dot Hill sites. **Details: Mary Sullivan 01-858 3565. General info. on events and Trust: 01-968 5369.**

FRI 2 NOV

MANCHESTER 'Fighting Cuts in Social Security' 7.30pm Town Hall. Spkrs. Michael Meacher, MP, Graham Stanger. **Org. Manchester Campaign Against Social Security Cuts, 21 Hall Rd, Manchester 14. 061-225 5695.**

SUN 4 NOV

LONDON British Friends of Peace Now Annual Conf.

MON 5 NOV

LEWISHAM Keep GLC Fireworks Party with music, food, stalls. 7.30pm Downham Fields. **Details: Dolly 01-697 7200.**

TUES 6 NOV

LONDON 'How we got Here' talk by Hazel Downing on the History of women's employment in the office. 1pm St. Edmund the King Church, Lombard St, EC3 (entrance at rear of George Yard). Adm. free. **Org. City Centre,** a new info. and resource service for office workers., **Rm. 402, Southbank Hs., Black Prince Rd, SE1 01-735 8903.**

WED 7 NOV

LONDON 'Social Problems created by Technological Change' RVA open meeting with Mike Cooley. 7.15pm **RVA, 1 Amwell St, EC1. 01-278 0804.**

THURS 8 NOV

LONDON Public Meetings — rolling programme from 2.30pm Central Hall, Westminster. Local Government issues — future of the GLC. Lobby of MPs. Contact local campaigns — **Southwark: SCVS, 135 Rye La, SE15 01-732 8777. Wandsworth: Putney Resource Centre, 145A Putney High St, SW15 01-788 1199.**

FRI 9 NOV

LONDON Miners' Benefit — Cabaret with the Wild Girls and John Hegley, live music, Disco, late bar. 8pm till late Haringey Community & Trade Union Centre, 2A Brabant Rd, Wood Green, N22. Adm. £2/£1 UB40. Wheelchair access but no disabled toilets. **Org. Haringey Brnch. NALGO 01-881 3000 x 3351 for details/tickets.**

SUN 11 NOV

LONDON W. London Labour & Trades Union Movement Conf. in support of the miners Hounslow Civic Centre, Lampton Rd, Hounslow. Spkrs. Jack Collins, Gen. Sec. Kent NUM, a striking Notts miner. Workshops, creche, food, parking, Adm. free but collection for miners. **Org. West London Miners Support Cttees. Details: 01-572 3764 (day).**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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MEETINGS

PROBLEMS OF BUILDING A SOCIALIST SOCIETY discussed by John Berryman, Lecturer in International Relations and Dennis Ogden, Lecturer in Soviet Economics and Politics. Wednesday 7 November, Public Library, Queen's Avenue, N10. 8 p.m. Muswell Hill C.P.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 4 Nov. 8 p.m. informal Q/A Meeting 'Reincarnation & Karma' ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, 7 November, 7.30 p.m.

Central Library, Holloway Rd & Fieldway Cres, Islington, N7

Speakers: **Des Wilson**, Freedom of Information Campaign; **John Ward**, Secretary First Division Association; **David Gamper**, Liberal leader Hackney Council

Admission Free.
Organised by Islington South and Finsbury Liberals

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IN MEMORIAM

ON THE 30th anniversary of the start of the Algerian War of Liberation my thoughts go to my fellow Algerians of European descent, like **FERNAND YVETON** and **HENRI MAILLOT**, who gave their lives for a free Algeria. François J. CAVIGLIOLI

ANNOUNCEMENT

COMPETITION is just another excuse for male aggression. Fight back! Feminist games-playing collective (responsible for 'Mistress Mind' among others) interested in compiling non-sexist version of Trivial Pursuit. Box 9597.

FINANCIAL

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover St, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, London W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

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HEARTSEARCH ADS MAKE CONTACTS SIMPLE AND INEXPENSIVE. Just **£4** buys you an ad. of up to **24 WORDS** and a **FREE BOX NUMBER!** If you want to say more, **extra words are only 26p each.** We send your replies on to you at no extra charge. Even sending your ad to us costs nothing if you use our **FREEPOST** address: Classified Dept. New Statesman, FREEPOST, London EC1B 1EB. You can also phone your ad in to us and pay by credit card: Telephone 01-251 5487/8. (Note — Free box numbers only available with this offer — min. charge £4). To reply to a box number, write your reply (if more than one reply enclose each in a separate envelope), place in an envelope marked clearly with the box number, and send to: Box No. Replies, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

ANY WOMAN interested in economics or any other social science, should get in touch with Continental bachelor, 30s, for close relationship, possibly marriage. London. Box 9563.

ARE YOU a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARE YOU looking for petite blonde Continental Jewess? Am divorced, but undamaged. Professionally successful, warm-hearted, energetic, non-left wing. You are 45-55, stimulating, fit not fat; lover of life, music, travel and caring committed togetherness. Please be honest about yourself. Photo appreciated, returned. Box 9587.

ASIAN MALE, 36, socialist, seeks anti-racist female, with sense of humour, for friendship and love. Pref. Leeds area. Box 9585.

ATTRACTIVE DIVORCEE
blonde, 40, Jewish (non-practising), with wide interests including conversation, spiritualism, philosophy, theatre, music, seeks like-minded male. Sense of humour vital!
Central London.
Box 9589

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man (58) loves arts, seeks attractive, sensual, non-smoking woman, slim/medium (any age to 53), any race/circumstance for warm friendship/enjoyments. Pref. London/surrounding areas. Box 9487.

AUSTRALIAN RESIDENT, 55, UK origin re-visiting 1985, 5' 10", good physique, educated, wide interests, warm, virile, seeks correspondence view fulfilling friendship lady 45-60, prefer tallish, well-built, open, sensual, easy-going, any status. Pennett, P.O. Box 123, Collins Street, Victoria 3000.

BILLY, 44, atheist, lovelorn frisky farmer, single, desires friendship/correspondence/meetings with young, frisky lady with initiative, who's itching for some affectionate attention. Among other interests I enjoy, are naturism, dancing, reading, secularism, travel, scuba diving, photography, swimming, biking, walks and camping. N. Ireland/anywhere. Box 9370.

BLACK GENTLEMAN, student, 26, quiet and shy, non-smoker. Seeks compatible female for intimate and permanent relationship. Box 9584.

CARING & TOLERANT man sought by tall, single mother (37). I'm interested in the countryside, books, domesticity and have a professional job. Sussex. Box 9573.

CATHOLIC, CELTIC, Aquarian homosexual man, 29, independent and often sympathetic, multi-cultural and polymathic, has a sizeable gap in otherwise full-to-bursting life of over-working (in arts industry), over-eating and over-travelling, for a similarly intelligent, stimulating and humorous partner (renaissance man, 21+, ideally, but will gladly settle for realistic offer), in compassionate relationship of integrity and affection. Box 9601.

CRACKING LOOKING, left-wing feminist (whatever that means), neurotic mother (37) of 3 neurotic teenagers, wishes to meet equally neurotic male, who is part-mechanic, joiner, painter, gardener. There is also a neurotic dog. Strathclyde area. Box 9574.

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FEMALE GRADUATE, 31, London, boyfriend gone, stable, warm, lively, straightforward, socialist, urban/rural, intellectual/grassroots interests, seeks similar male. Photo? New female friends welcome. Box 9504.

FEMALE PSYCHOLOGIST, 35, divorced, one daughter, warm, attractive, affectionate, strong-minded, has everything in life except loving relationship with special man under 45. Birmingham area. Box 9556.

FEMINIST, DIVORCED, 42, non-smoker, interested arts, walking, peace movement, energetic and lively but likes early nights, seeks warm, considerate man, occasional weekends South Yorkshire. Box 9564.

GAY PROFESSIONAL offers Oriental or African, 21-30, exciting prospects in managerial agriculture, linked to a loyal personal relationship. Must be genuine. Box 9575.

HELLO! WHICH man out there wants to share theatre, arts, wining/dining, classical music, with attractive, professional London woman, mid-40s. Who's willing to chance it? Box 9511.

INDEPENDENT, BUT dependable, professional man (52), seeks friendship (and love) of caring woman, aged 40-60. South London or Southern Counties. Box 9566.

INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE woman, early fifties, car owner, wishes to meet sincere, normal business or professional man for discreet friendship. Age about same, height no less than average, and wide range of interests (other than sport) an advantage. Occasional meetings with music, dining, conversation, anywhere round borders of Northants. Just a really good chum needed. Recent photo please: will be returned. Box 9570.

JOSIE, 39, lives W. Midlands, seeks randy, athletic male, 30-50, all moving parts operational, well educated, solvent, for loving relationship with view to permanency. Box 9586.

***LONDON MALE** (32). I'm sitting here in my* room in the bath-tub chair, with some petals wafting in front of my nose; the lamp has its hat cocked towards the wall and the bulb illumines just that corner of the room where I am. Woman feminist? Why don't you join me by the lamp? Box 9598.

LONDON ordinary man, early 40s, divorced, seeking to meet more female friends, with sense of humour. Box 9562.

LONELY DIVORCE, 43, wishes to meet understanding lady, 20-40, view relationship/marriage. I have University degrees, reasonable looks and temperament and am intelligent, ambitious, caring. London. Box 9604.

LONELY HEAD — not lonely heart, Continental lady, art historian, seeks contact with lady of wide cultural interests, writer or academic teacher. Box 9567.

LONELY MALE composer/writer, 34, 5' 6", seeks interesting lady, any age, for deep friendship and sharing arts/creative exploration. Sincerity appreciated. London. Box 9603.

LOVING PARTNERSHIP sought by presentable, tallish, divorcee, 53, own home/job. Is there a man in his fifties somewhere Home Counties/London? Box 9558.

MANCHESTER WOMAN, 30s, seeks gentle clown to share her jelly with cream and occasional bottle of wine. Box 9557.

MIDDLE-AGED MALE has all the necessities for happy life except the essential ingredient — someone to love and cherish and vice versa. Photo, etc, reciprocated. You can't win the lottery if you don't buy a ticket. Box 9528.

PRESENTLY IN Midlands, female, attractive, 37, divorced, graduate (arts), main vices writing and community work, loves music (especially classical), countryside, books, would welcome compatible male (30-50ish) in her life for marriage. Non-smoker. Box 9588.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, 40, sincere, understanding, two lovely children, broken marriage, many interests, musical, seeks loving relationship with caring, non-smoking man, 40s-50s. Box 9565.

PROFOUNDLY DEAF but unwilling to be confined to plate glass prison. Gent., 50s, passably intelligent, seeks warm-hearted female, Birmingham area, for mutual company. Box 9572.

RETIRED, LONELY male, middle 50s, no ties, living in Central London, would like to meet female for sincere friendship and holidays, country preferred, would be prepared to live in as paying partner. Box 9515.

SHY, LEFTISH, single male, 27, vegetarian, cyclist, interested in music, theatre, pubs, seeks compatible Ms for company and friendship. London/South East area. Box 9502.

SINGLE MALE graduate, 34, quiet, rather shy, introspective, likes literature, walking, parks, home-life (dislikes sport, pubs, smoking, noise, church), not politically-minded, seeks similar young lady, for permanent relationship. S. London/Bromley area. Box 9576.

SOCIALIST MALE, 34, would like compatible female to share films, pubs, talking, politics, books and maybe more, who knows? Preferably North Lancs/South Cumbria. Box 9525.

SOUTH NORFOLK: female 23, socialist, recently moved into country, seeks contact, male or female, with feelings for art, female empathy and the sea. Box 9560.

TALL, ARTISTIC, sensitive man, **44,** hoping to find an intelligent, warm, imaginative, feminine girl, between 33 and 40, without encumberances, to share loving, creative, meaningful life together. Herts based. Photo and phone no. please. Box 9599.

VERY MYOPIC male, Ametropic, 55, Anglophile, American, literate, lettered, travelled, unencumbered, seeks female with similar opthalmological malady for commiseration, mutuality, association, direction etc. Box 9372.

WIDOW, 63, invites four singles, similar age, to spend Christmas/New Year with her in Welsh seaside village. Share expenses and chores. Box 9497.

WOMAN GRADUATE, 39, with career, Sheffield, Manchester area. Interests include fitness, socialist politics. Seeking smokefree, sensitive man, unattached, intellectual, for sharing relationship. Box 9590.

WOMAN, 27, active trade unionist, almost fit, enjoys music (all sorts), countryside, life, getting letters, looking for contact with friendly male, Berks/London area. Box 9561.

62 YEAR OLD, middle-aged man, wide interests, seeks lively-minded and lusty woman, for close companion'd hours (or days). London or Home Counties. Box 9559.

YOUR AVERAGE 46 yrs-old female of average intelligence, interests and ability (but less than average mobility), wants to correspond with uncomplicated men, from the Other Island. Box 9602.

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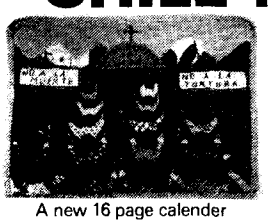

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